ΓΛΩΣΣΟ-ΧΑΛΙΝΩΣΙΣ.

OR, A

BRIDLE

FOR THE

Tongue.

Wherein Christians are Exhorted and Directed to a Holy and Religious Vigilancy; as over all their Ways, so in special over their Words.

By JOHN BRINSLEY, of *Great Yarmouth.*

If any man among you seem to be Religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans Religion is vain, Jam. 1. 26.

LONDON,
Printed by *A. Maxwell*, for *G. Sawbridg*, at the Bible upon *Ludgate*-Hill. 1664.

To all that ſeem to be Religious in the Town of Great *Yarmouth*, or elſewhere,

Grace and Peace.

SIxteen years *ſince I took the boldneſs to hold forth* A Bridle for the Times, *which was then* a Word in ſeaſon: *And I have now adventured to do the like for the* Tongue, *which is* a Word never out of ſeaſon. *Sure I am, thoſe* Times *were not more* unquiet *then, then this* Member, *being unſanctified, in all times hath been, and at the preſent is; Of which St.* James *ſpeaking, calleth it* Ἀκατάσχεσον κακὸν, Malum inquietum, (*as the vulgar* Latine *renders it,*) *an* unquiet, *or* unruly Evil, *Jam.* 3. 8. *Neither did thoſe unhappy commotions then kindle a greater Fire in this* Nati-

Preached, An. 1643. *Printed,* An. 1647.

on, *then ſuch a* Tongue *is apt to do in the* World. *Which the ſame Apoſtle there ſetteth forth to be the* grand Incendiary; *ſo as being it ſelf* ſet on fire of Hell, (*as he ſaith of it*) it ſetteth on fire the courſe of Nature, *Verſ.* 6. *For the allaying and quenching of this* Fire *it is, that I have now drawn this* Sanctuary-water, *which I here pour forth: Which though it come forth from an* earthen *and* broken Veſſel, *yet I deſire, and, through the gracious concurrence of that good* Spirit *which hath led and gone along with me to the* Well, *hope, that it may be ſomewhat uſeful to this intent and purpoſe. And to this end, I here preſent it unto all you who* ſeem to be Religious; *Among whom there are not a few who are not ſo carefull of this Member as they ought to be,* (*as, indeed, who is?*) *ſuffering it to run out extravagantly, to the diſhonour of God, the offence of their Bre-*

thren,

thren, the ſhame of their Profeſſion, the wounding of their own Conſciences, and endangering of others. A thing which our holy and reverend Mr. Perkins *taking notice of, ſadly bemoaned in his time, being thereby induced to publiſh that his* Treatiſe *about* The Government of the Tongue, *(as in his Prefatory Epiſtle he declares.) And ſurely, he that hath an Ear, and a Heart, cannot but be ſenſible of the like evils in the preſent times, wherein this* World of iniquity *(as that Apoſtle, in the ſame Verſe laſt cited, calls the* Tongue*) aboundeth as much, if not more then ever. Oh the profane, helliſh, and damnable* Oathes *(if not* Blaſphemies*) which by unhallowed mouthes are daily belched out! What* Revilings, *what* Curſings, *what* filthy ſpeakings? *What uncharitable* Backbitings *and* Upbraidings? *What* ſlandering *and* evil-ſpeaking *of the*

good ways of God, and thoſe that walk in them? What ſcurrilous Jeſting, *what* Quarrelling, *what* Lying, *what* Flattering *and* Diſſembling, *what* fooliſh Jangling, *what* vain *and* idle Talking *are almoſt every where to be heard? Now, ſurely, this cannot but cry aloud in the ears of that holy* God, *who being of as pure* Ears *as* Eyes, *and hearing it cannot but be highly provoked and offended by it. And may it alſo do the like in ours; that being ſenſible of theſe provocations, we may ſeek to appeaſe and quench that wrath which we may juſtly fear to be kindled againſt us, and prevent the breaking of it forth upon us. In order whereunto let every of us make it our firſt work to begin a* Reformation *at home: being humbled before God for our own former miſcarriages of this kinde, and ſeeking pardon of them, to take up the like holy* Reſolution *for the future that* the Man áfter Gods

own

own heart *here in this Text doth*, Saying, *to God and our own ſouls, that we* will take heed to our wayes, that we ſin not with our Tongues. *Which whileſt we purpoſe and endeavour, the* God of all grace, *who hath wrought in us this* Will, *work the* Deed *alſo, enabling us to do what we have reſolved upon; ſo as that we may attain unto ſome degree of that* perfection *which the ſame Apoſtle attributes unto that man who hath learned this Leſſon, ſo to* Bridle his Tongue as not to offend in word, *Jam.* 3. 2. *To whoſe tuition and tutorage commending and committing you and my ſelf, I reſt*

Your ever devoted

Servant in the Lord,

JOH. BRINSLEY.

From my Study in Great *Yarmouth*, *March* 25. 1664.

ΓΛΩΣΣΟ-ΧΑΛΙΝΩΣΙΣ.

OR

A Bridle for the Tongue.

PSAL. 39. 1.

I ſaid I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my tongue.

IT is reported of one *Pambus* (an obvious ſtory which I find taken notice of by divers of our Divines) that being himſelf an illiterate perſon, and deſirous to learn one of *Davids Pſalms*, one unto whom he came undertook to read to him this 39th; which when he had begun, having read onely this firſt Verſe, he wiſhed him to deſiſt and proceed no further, telling him, that if he could but practiſe what he was there taught, he ſhould think it enough for him: And being blamed by that his Teacher becauſe he came not to him again for ſix Months after, he told him, that as yet he had not fully learned that one Verſe. And living many years after, being demanded by a familiar friend of his, whether he had as yet

Hiſt Tripart. *l.* 8. *c.* 1. *Perkins* Government of the Tongue. *c.* 12. *Turnbul* Serm. in *Jam.* 3 2. *Manton. ibid.* The right ordering of the Tongue a difficult Leſſon.

yet learned it, he returned him anſwer, that though he had been 49 years in learning it, yet had he not fully taken it out, ſo as to fulfill what was there required. And truly ſuch ſhall we find the *Leſſon* here held forth, though *ſhort*, yet difficult; *difficult*, though not to *underſtand*, yet to *practiſe*; though ſoon read over, yet not ſo ſoon taken out. So St. *James* looked upon it, who pronounceth him who hath learned this Leſſon to be Ἀνὴρ Τέλειος, *A perfect man*, Jam. 3. 2. one that hath attained a high and more then ordinary degree of perfection. But let not this take off any of us from the learning of it, but rather excite us thereunto, to hearken to it the more attentively, to ſtudy it the more ſeriouſly, to remember it the more carefully, that ſo we may practiſe it conſcionably: It being a matter of that high concernment, that (as the foreſaid Apoſtle tells us, *Jam.* 1. 26.) without it all our ſeeming and pretended Religion will prove μάταια θρησκεία, a *vain Religion.*

Which being premiſed, come we now to break in abruptly upon the words, wherein we ſhall find a holy Reſolution taken up by the *man after Gods own heart*, the Kingly Prophet *David*. So much is intimated to us in that word which meeteth us at the threſhold; the firſt word wherewith I ſhall begin.

David's Reſolution

I ſaid,] *Dixi*, i. e. *Statui, Decrevi*, I Determined and Reſolved. So the word [*ſaying*] is often uſed in ſacred and profane writers. There being a two-fold *word*, Λόγος προφορικὸς, & Ἐνδιάθετος; An *Outward*, and an *Inward* word: The

The one uttered by the *tongue*, the other conceived in the *mind*; the one like the Child in the womb, the other when it is brought forth. In the former of theſe ſences the word is commonly and properly uſed, *ſaying* being the act of the *tongue*. In the latter, not unfrequently, or yet unfitly, the *ſoul* holding a diſcourſe and communion with *God*, and *it ſelf*, ſpeaking to the one and to the other. To *God*: *O my ſoul* (ſaith *David*) *thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my Lord*, Pſal. 16, 25. ſpeaking of that inward confidence which he had in his God, and how he had engaged his ſoul to him. To *it ſelf*: *Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be ſtill*, (ſo he wiſheth that his enemies would do) *Pſal.* 4.4. What a man *thinketh*, *believeth*, he may be ſaid to ſay. Thus *the fool* (*Nabal*, the wicked and profane perſon) is ſaid to *ſay in his heart, that there is no God*, Pſal. 14.1. he doth, or would perſwade himſelf ſo. *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten*, Pſal. 10.11. And ſo what he *purpoſeth* and *reſolveth* upon. In this ſence ſaith *David*, I ſaid, *I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord*, Pſal. 32. 5. Being comfortably aſſured of finding mercy with his God, he reſolveth to put himſelf upon that way. And ſo again, *Pſal.* 119.57. *I ſaid* (ſaith he) *that I would keep thy words*; I determined and reſolved ſo to do. And ſo underſtand we the word here in the Text; *I ſaid, I will take heed, &c.* that is, I took up a firm Reſolution ſo to do.

Διάνοια Διάλογος Ψυχῆς διάλογος. *Plato in Sophiſt.*

Obſerv. Holy Reſolutions to be taken up by Chriſtians

Such Reſolutions Gods Saints are to take up. Mark it: *Such Reſolutions* (I ſay,) holy reſolutions;

tions, laying ſacred engagements upon their own ſouls: Which (to ſpend a little time in proſecuting this *Obſervation*) are of two ſorts; *General*, or *Particular*.

1. General Reſolutions.

1. *General Reſolutions*, engaging and binding their ſouls unto God, to walk cloſely with him in the conſcionable endeavour of a univerſal obedience, in performing whatever duties he requireth, avoiding and abandoning whatever ſins he forbiddeth. Such was *Davids Reſolution*, of which he ſpeaks in that Text even now made uſe of, *Pſal.* 119.57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord*, (ſaith he,) *I have ſaid that I would keep thy words.* He had laid a ſtrong engagement upon his ſoul ſo to do, the ſtrongeſt that he could lay upon it, having bound himſelf by a ſolemn *Oath* ſo to do. *I have ſworn* (ſaith he) *and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments*, Pſal. 119.106. And ſuch an engagement muſt every one that would have God to be his God, lay upon his own ſoul. Not contenting himſelf with ſome ſleight purpoſes, which vaniſh like the dew when the Sun ariſeth. So fareth it with too many, who take up ſuch purpoſes in the night of their Affliction, but no ſooner doth the Sun-ſhine of proſperity begin to ariſe, and break forth upon them, but preſently they forget what they then had ſome thoughts of. But taking up a *ſerious Reſolution*. Such was that which the children of *Iſrael* made profeſſion of unto *Moſes*, when they requeſted him to go and be a mediator betwixt God and them, receiving his commands from him, and tranſmitting them unto them, *Deut.* 5.27. *Go thou neer* (ſay they) *and*

and ſpeak thou unto us all that the Lord our God ſhall ſpeak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. Which (as the verſe following tells us) when the Lord heard he was well pleaſed with, highly approving of it; *I have heard* (ſaith he) *the words of this people which they have ſpoken, they have well ſaid, all that they have ſpoken.* And ſuch a *Reſolution* God expecteth and looketh for from all thoſe who profeſs themſelves to be his people, owning him for their God, a *ſerious Reſolution*; that they ſhould ſay in their ſouls unto him what *David* ſaith he did, that he is, and ſhall be their *Lord*; giving up themſelves to him, engaging themſelves to his ſervice, reſolving to ſerve him, and be obedient to him in all things, and to truſt perfectly in him, *&c.* This is the *General Reſolution*, which is to be taken up by all thoſe who have the name of God called upon them.

2. But beſides this there are *Particular Reſolutions*, whereby men engage themſelves to the performance of ſome particular *duty*, or to ſpecial watchfulneſs againſt ſome particular *ſin*. Of the former kind was that which *David* took up for the providing of a reſting place for the *Ark of God*, which he deſireth God to remember, *Pſal.* 132. 1, 2, &c. *Lord remember David, and all his afflictions, How he ſware unto the Lord, and vowed to the mighty God of Jacob. Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my houſe, nor go up into my bed; I will not give ſleep to my eyes, nor ſlumber to my eye-lids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of* 2. Particular Reſolutions.

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Jacob. Of the latter kind was that of *Job*, who making a ſolemn proteſtation of his integrity, among other things, ſetteth forth how he had charmed his eyes, by making a *Covenant* with them, *Job* 31.1. *I made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a maid?* He had reſolved with himſelf not to ſuffer his eyes to gaze upon any ſuch objects as might prove a ſpare to him, an occaſion of ſtirring up in him *any* inordinate luſts.

To be taken up Occaſionally.

And ſuch *Reſolutions* Chriſtians are to take up, as that *General* one, ſo alſo *Particular* ones, as occaſion is offered. Both which we here meet with in the Text; where *David* ſaith that he had *ſaid* he had reſolved upon ſomewhat with himſelf. And what was that he had *ſaid*, that he had ſo reſolved about? The words following declare it. In the *General*, he had ſaid, *I will take heed to my ways*; to all his ways, the whole courſe of his life. In *Particular*, to his *Tongue*, that he might not tranſgreſs therewith: *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my* tongue.

Reaſ. Such Reſolutions ſerving.

And great *Reaſon* there is why Chriſtians ſhould do the like, take up and make uſe of ſuch Reſolutions, which are of great uſe unto the ſoul, ſerving for diverſe ends.

1. As a Bridle.

1. As a *Bridle*. Such uſe *David* here made of it, as he tells us in the words following, in the cloſe of the verſe, *I will keep my mouth with a Bridle*. A *Bridle* of what uſe it is we know, to keep the horſe in whoſe mouth it is, from running or flying out to the endangering of his rider.

And

And of ſuch uſe are holy reſolutions to the Soul. The Soul being ſubject to fly out, and break forth into inordinate paſſions and ſpeeches, which may be of dangerous import; theſe being laid upon it, they are of uſe for the bridling and reſtraining of it, the keeping of it in a due and orderly frame and temper.

2. And (ſecondly) as they ſerve for a Bridle, ſo for a *Spur*. As a Bridle to reſtrain from ſin, ſo a Spur to inſtigate and put on to duty, to which the ſoul is thereby engaged. 2. As a Spur.

3. And (thirdly) as a *Bulwark* or *Fortreſs*, which being raiſed up in the Soul may ſerve to defend it againſt the aſſaults and temptations of Sathan. Of ſuch uſe was *Job's Covenant*, which he had made with his eyes, to him. But I ſhall not enlarge upon it. In theſe, and divers other reſpects, ſuch *Reſolutions* may be of great uſe and advantage to Chriſtians, upon the account whereof they ars to be taken up by them. 3. As a Bulwark.

And being thus taken up, they are alſo upon occaſion to be *Renewed*. Such was this *Reſolution* here in the Text, *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways*, &c. Why, had not *David* reſolved upon this long before? Surely yes, he had done it from his youth upward, this being the firſt ſtep of Converſion to take up ſuch a Reſolution, but now upon occaſion he reneweth it. And the like are Gods people to do by all their holy *Reſolutions*, upon ſpecial occaſions to repeat, and renew them. Thus we read how *Joſiah* and the people of the *Jews* renewed the *Covenant of the Lord*, 2 *King.* 23.3. that general Covenant which before they *Obſer.* 2. Such Reſolutions occaſionally to be Renewed.

had entred into, *To walk after the Lord, and to keep his Commandments*; they being under too great defection, renewed it. And the like had *Joshua* before, upon the like occasion, done, *Josh.* 24.25. The people having declared their assent and consent to it, *v.* 24. *And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey:* he concludeth and ratifieth the Covenant betwixt God and them, *So Joshua made a Covenant with the people that day.* And the like we read also of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 29.10. Gods wrath having broke forth upon the people in several kinds of judgments, *Now* (saith he) *it is in my heart to make a Covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.* And the like are Gods people to do upon special occasions, as to renew their general Covenant with God, so their personal and particular Resolutions and engagements.

Reas. That they may not be forgotten.

And great Reason there is why they should do so, that they may not *forget* them. This of themselves they are apt to do, even to forget their *General Covenant* with their God. This is that which the Lord so sadly complains against his people *Israel* for, *Jer.* 2. 32.. *My people have forgotten me days without number.* And again, *Cap.* 3. *v.*21. *They have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the Lord their God.* They were guilty of great Apostacy and backsliding, (as the verses following set it forth) they neglected the Worship and Service of their God, as if they had quite forgotten the *Covenant* which they had made with him. And the like are Christians apt to do; being

being, in their *Baptiſme*, put under ſuch a *Covenant*, they are apt to forget it, at leaſt not to remember it as they ought to do, ſo as to perform what they were there obliged to do. Whereupon they are often to renew it, (as in the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, which was inſtituted and ordained for that end and purpoſe, ſo) by taking up *new Reſolutions*, binding their ſouls with *new cords*, (as the men of *Judah* did *Sampſon*, Judg. 15. 13.) Thus were the Sacrifices of old wont to be bound to the Altar. *Bind the Sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the Altar.* Pſal. 118. 27. Thus are Gods people, who would offer up themſelves an acceptable ſacrifice unto him, to binde their ſouls with the cords of holy Reſolutions; which, if broken, or ſlacked, they are to renew them.

And this they are to do, as at other times, upon other occaſions, ſo ſpecially in the *time of Affliction* and diſtreſs. Such was *Davids* condition at this time when he took up this *Reſolution* here in the Text, he was under the hand of God, his afflicting hand, which lay heavy upon him, as we may take notice from divers paſſages in the ſequel of the Pſalm. As from *Verſ.* 10. where he bemoans his condition unto God, praying for the removal of his hand, *Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thy hand.* And again, *ver.* laſt, *O ſpare me that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence and be no more.* Thus was he under ſome violent affliction, in a ſad, and, to humane apprehenſion, even a deſperate condition. Now in this condition what courſe doth he take? Why, the firſt thing he doth is to renew

Obſer. 3. Such Reſolutions to be taken up in time of Affliction.

renew his holy *Reſolutions*, which before he had made, *I ſaid, I will take heed to my wayes*, &c. At ſuch times *David* was much exerciſed in taking up ſuch *Reſolutions*, laying new engagements upon his ſoul. So much we may take notice of from that Text, *Pſal.* 66. where having had gracious experience of the goodneſs of God in working a temporal ſalvation for him, in delivering him out of thoſe many and great dangers wherein he was involved; having been like a Fiſh in the Net, as he ſaith, *verſ.* 11 *Thou broughteſt us into the net, thou layedſt affliction upon our loyns*; but the Net being broken, and he and his delivered, now he ſets forth what he would do to teſtifie his thankfulneſs unto God for ſo great a favour, *verſ.* 13, 14. *I will go* (ſaith he) *into thy Houſe with burnt-offerings, I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken when I was in trouble.* Then was the time when he made thoſe Vows which now he ſaith he would perform, when he was in trouble. And ſuch time are very fit and ſeaſonable for Chriſtians to make Vows in to their God, to lay new engagements upon their ſouls, by taking up, making, and renewing their holy Reſolutions, in as much as

Reaſ. 1. Times of Affliction Soul-awakening times,

1. Such times are *Soul-awakening* times. Times of proſperity are ſleeping times, wherein the Soul is apt to be lull'd aſleep, ſo as to forget its duty. But times of adverſity are awakening times, wherein God calleth to remembrance the ſins and ſervices of his people; what is their duty to do, and what they have neglected to do; what duties

duties they have omitted, what ſins they have committed. And the Soul being thus awakened, now it is a fit time to make and renew ſuch holy *Reſolutions*.

2. And being a Soul-awakening time, it is alſo a *Soul-humbling* time: So it was to the Church and people of God, the people of the *Jews*, who bewailing thoſe grievous calamities which they ſuffered in their *Babyloniſh Captivity*, ſet forth how they were affected with the thought thereof, *Lam.* 3. 19, 20. *Remembring mine affliction, and my miſery, the wormwood and the gall,* (the bitter ſufferings which there they met with) *my ſoul hath them ſtill in remembrance, and is humbled in me.* It muſt be a proud and obdurate heart that affliction will not humble. And by humbling it, it maketh it the more fit to be wrought upon, as the Fire doth the Iron which is heated in it. And upon this account Chriſtians ſhould not neglect theſe opportunities to work upon their own ſouls and ſpirits, by laying new obligations upon them, taking up, and renewing their holy Reſolutions of cleaving more cloſely unto God then ever they have done. 2. Soul-humbling times.

3. And again, This is a *Soul-trying* time. The *hour of Affliction* is an *hour of Temptation*, as it is called *Rev.* 3. 10. ὥρα πειρασμοῦ. Times of trouble are times of tryal. *Thou, O God, haſt proved us, thou haſt tryed us as ſilver is tryed. Thou broughteſt us into the net, thou layedſt affliction upon our loyns.* Pſal. 66. 10, 11. At ſuch times the ſoul is ſubject to variety of temptations more then at others, which if not looked to, may 3. Soul-trying times.

prove

prove dangerous to it. Now when an Enemy hath drawn up his Forces, and is coming to aſſault a place, it is time for the Inhabitants to raiſe what Sconces they may, for their own ſecurity, that the Enemy which hath beſieged them may not break in upon them. And ſo is it for the Soul at ſuch times, in times of affliction, to fortifie and ſtrengthen it ſelf by all the means it can, that Satan may not now prevail againſt them, that his temptations may not break in upon it. Such was *Davids* condition at this time, it being (as it is by Expoſitors generally conceived) that time when he fled before *Abſalom*, it was to him an hour of temptation, a time wherein he was expoſed to many kinds of temptations: For the *Father* to be thus uſed by a *Son*, who (acting directly contrary to his name, *Abſalom* ſignifying *a father of peace*, or *the fathers peace*,) raiſed this unnatural Rebellion againſt him, ſeeking to dethrone and deſtroy him, this could not but exceedingly exaſperate his ſpirit. So it did, having kindled a fire within him, as he expreſſeth it, *ver.* 3. *My heart was hot within me, while I was muſing the fire burned*; the fire of inward diſcontent, which even boiled in his heart, ſtirring up in it inordinate paſſions, which were ready to evaporate and break forth in ſutable expreſſions. So it there followeth, *Then ſpake I with my tongue*; he began to break forth into murmuring againſt God, to queſtion and quarrel with his diſpenſations. Now finding his ſoul falling into ſuch a diſtemper, as an Antidote and remedy to prevent what he ſaw and felt himſelf ſubject to, he takes up this reſolution, laying

a new engagement upon his ſoul, that he would look to his *wayes*, and ſpecially to his *Tongue*, *I ſaid, I will look to my ways*, &c.

And herein (to make ſome *Application* of what hath been ſpoken) propound we him as a *Patern for our imitation*, learning of him to make uſe of the like means, upon the like occaſions, to like ends and purpoſes. And as at other times, ſo ſpecially in the *day of adverſity*, when we meet with croſs providences, ſad diſpenſations, whereby our ſouls are in danger of being diſtempered; now, for the quieting and ſetling, the guarding and ſecuring of them, take we up ſuch *Reſolutions*. Now *ſay* we, ſpeaking unto God and our ſelves, binding our ſouls with *new Cords*, new *Reſolutions*. Touching which take three or four *Directions*.

Applic. Such Reſolutions to be taken up,

Do we this *Adviſedly*, not *Raſhly*. It is the advice and counſel which the Town-Clerk of *Epheſus* gave unto the people, when he ſaw them in an uproar againſt *Paul*, *Ye ought* (ſaith he) *to be quiet, and to do nothing raſhly*. Act. 19. 36. And this counſel let Chriſtians hearken to. As at all other times, ſo eſpecially in the day of adverſity, when they find their ſpirits in an uproar, let them now take heed that they do nothing raſhly. Among other things, let them beware of taking up *raſh Reſolutions*, making raſh *Vows* and *Promiſes* unto God. *Be not raſh with thy mouth* (ſaith the Preacher,) *and let not thine heart be haſty to utter a thing before God*. Eccl. 5. 2. But herein what we do, do it adviſedly, deliberately, conſiderately. So did not *Jephtha* (as it is by Expoſitours, (the moſt of them) concluded)

Direct. 1. Adviſedly.

cluded) in making that vow unto God, when he was to go out against the children of *Ammon*, which we meet with, *Judg.* 11.30,31. *If* (saith he) *thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands; Then it shall be that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace, it shall be the Lords, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.* A confused and perplexed Vow, which however it may be (as by Expositours it is) qualified with some candid senses put upon it; yet since it seemeth to be rash and inconsiderate, in as much as he did not know what kind of creature he might first meet with, which possibly might have been a Dog, or some other unclean beast, and so the offering of it up as a Sacrifice to the Lord would have been abominable. And his Daughter coming forth as she did, he had no warrant to do the like to her as *Abraham* (having Gods warrant and command for it) is said intentionally to have done to his son, *Heb.* 11.17. and as it is by many conceived he did to her, to offer her up as a Burnt-offering, which there he bindeth himself to do. And no better was that *Adjuration* of *Sauls*, who bound himself, and the people with him, under a curse, from eating any thing until the evening, of which we read; 1 *Sam.* 14.24. An *unadvised Adjuration*, in as much as he did not know how necessitated some of them might be to eat, nor considered how the people might be thereby weakned and enfeebled, and so disinabled and hindred from obtaining so great a victory as otherwise they might. Such Vows, such Promises, such Resolutions

ſlutions take we heed of: what in this way we *ſay*, reſolve on, ſee that we do it adviſedly, conſiderately. Among other things conſidering theſe two: whether the thing which we reſolve upon be that which is *Warrantable*, and *Poſſible*, what we *may do*, and *can do*.

Conſidering whether the thing reſolved on be what

1. *May do.* Whether it be lawfull and warrantable, ſomewhat that God either requires, or allows, ſo as that we find ſome *warrant* for it in the Word, either *particular*, or *general*. Upon this ground *David* went when he took up that Reſolution of his for the providing of a reſting place for the Ark, he took notice that it was a thing which God would have done, and had foretold that it ſhould be done, and thereupon he reſolved to undertake that work; which however God did not permit him to do it, yet he accepted of that his purpoſe and reſolution. Thus in whatever we reſolve upon, ſee that we follow God, having from him, if not a particular, yet a general warrant for what we intend; taking heed that it be not a thing that is *evil* in *it ſelf*, or for *us* to do it. As it is when men ſhall vow that which is not within the ſphear of their vocation to do, as for a private perſon to undertake the work of a publick, *&c.* See that it be ſomewhat that we either muſt do, or may do.

1. May be done.

2. And (ſecondly) ſomewhat that we *can do*. I mean not of our ſelves, (for of our ſelves we can do nothing that good is, no though we will it; *To will is preſent with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not*, (ſaith regenerate St. *Paul*) *Rom.* 7. 18.) but through the ordinary aſſiſtance of

2 Can be done.

of divine grace and power. Upon this account divers of those *vows* which are so common, and so highly cried up in the Church of *Rome*, are justly condemned as unwarrantable and unlawful; as, *viz.* their vows of *Continence* and *Abstinence*, &c. in as much as it is not in the power of all those that make them to perform them. This take we heed of, that what we resolve upon be not above our reach, above that ability which either we have, or can hope for. Thus see that our *Resolutions* which we take up be warrantable upon both these accounts. Such was *Davids* here in the Text, no other then what he ought to do, and what by the assistance of Gods grace he might be able to do, to *look to his ways, and keep his Tongue.*

Direct. 2. Seriously. 2. Our Resolutions being thus warrantable, let them also be *serious*, and earnest: not taken up out of some by and sinister respect, but out of a good intention, with an eye to the glory of God, and the good of our own souls. It was the want of this that made that pretended Resolution of that *Scribe* in the Gospel to vanish as it did. He coming to Christ declares to him what his resolution was, *viz.* to be a constant follower of him. *Master*, (saith he) *I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, Matth. 8. 19. But when Christ had told him what he must expect to meet with in case he should do what he promised, how he must look for no such temporal advantage as he had an eye at, as profits, or honours, &c. presently he recedes and falls off, so as we hear no more of him. And such, and no better, are the resolutions which

are

are taken up by many; and that, as at other times, ſo ſpecially in times of *affliction* and diſtreſs, and in particular, upon the *ſick-bed*, when they come to look Death in the face; then, Oh what purpoſes will they take up, what promiſes will they make, what engagements will they lay upon their ſouls, That if ever God ſhall be pleaſed to recover and raiſe them up again, they will become new men, living after another manner then they have done, *ſaying*, with *David*, that they *will take heed to their ways!* &c. but no ſooner have they attained what they deſired, but they have forgotten what then they *ſaid*, ſo ſhewing themſelves to have diſſembled with God, and with their own ſouls. Take heed it be not ſo with us: What Reſolutions we take up, being for the *matter* of them warrantable, ſee that for the *manner* they be ſerious and unfeigned, the *ſaying of our hearts*.

And being ſuch, now *take them not up in our own ſtrength*. This it was that enervated that *Reſolution* which *Peter* took up of adhering to his Lord and Maſter Chriſt in what-ever ſtate and condition: *Though all men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended*, (ſaith he) *Matth.* 26. 33. This he profeſſed; and it was no more then he intended, and had reſolved upon, and that ſeriouſly: But taking it up in his own ſtrength, we know how he failed in the performance of it, being the onely Diſciple that denied him whom he had ſo engaged himſelf to own. Take we heed of ſplitting upon the ſame Rock. What ever it is that we reſolve upon, and engage our ſelves to do, let it not be in con-

Direct. 3. Not in our own ſtrength.

fidence of our own ſtrength, but in the ſtrength of God, relying upon him for abilility to perform what we intend and deſire to do. Thus did *David* manage all his undertakings againſt his *temporal Enemies*: As againſt that great *Goliah*, whom he telleth, *I come unto thee in the Name of the Lord of Hoſts*, 1 Sam. 17. 45. So againſt all others. *All Nations compaſſed me about, but in the Name of the Lord I will deſtroy them.* Pſal. 118. 10. Which he repeats and inculcates once and again in the two following Verſes. And thus let us engage, and go forth againſt our *ſpiritual Enemies*; as alſo ſet upon *Duties*; not in our *own names*, in confidence of any ſtrength in our ſelves, but in the Name of the Lord, wholly relying upon his Power and Promiſes.

Direct. 4. And having thus taken up ſuch Reſolutions, now ſee that we *forget them not*, but be carefull to perform what we have ſo engaged our ſelves to do. Thus doth *God* by what he *ſaith*, what ever he hath promiſed, or purpoſed; *I will haſten my word to perform it*, Jer. 1. 12. *Surely, as I have thought ſo ſhall it come to paſs, and as I have purpoſed ſo ſhall it ſtand*, Iſai. 14. 24. And be we thus ſtedfaſt in what we *ſay* unto him, in all our holy *Reſolutions*, *Vows*, *Covenants*, *Engagements*, which we have entred, or ſhall enter into, unto him. As in our *general Covenant*, our Chriſtian Engagement, of cleaving to him, and walking cloſely with him: *I have ſworn* (ſaith *David*) *and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements*, Pſal. 119 106. So, in our *particular Vows* and Reſolutions; what we have rightly reſolved

Carefully to be remembred and performed

reſolved on ſee that we perform, paying what we promiſe. *I will pay my vows unto the Lord,* (ſaith that Kingly Prophet) *Pſal.* 116. 14, 18. And this let all do. *Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God,* (ſaith he) *Pſal.* 76. 11. *When thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleaſure in fools,* (ſaith the *Preacher*) Eccleſ. 5. 4. To ſay and unſay unto *man,* make the beſt of it, is great folly; much more to do it unto *God. Better it is that thou ſhouldeſt not vow, then that thou ſhouldeſt vow and not pay;* (ſo he there goeth on) *Verſ.* 5.

Reſolutions and Vows made in the day of adverſity not to be forgotten.

And among other Reſolutions and Vows, forget not thoſe which we have made in the *day of adverſity. I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken when I was in trouble,* (ſaith *David*, in that fore-cited Text) *Pſal.* 66. 14. Thus, what we have then *ſaid,* ſee that we perform, taking heed leſt any of that guilt cleave unto us which we find charged upon the people of *Iſrael,* Pſal. 78. 35, 36. *They remembred that God was their Rock, and the High God their Redeemer. Nevertheleſs they did flatter him with their lips, and they lyed unto him with their tongues; For their heart was not right with him, neither were they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant.* But this I ſhall not any further enlarge upon.

The matter of *Davids* Reſolution.

I have done with the firſt word in the Text, which intimates unto us (as we have heard) a *holy Reſolution* that King *David* in the day of his trouble had taken up. Come we now to ſee the *Matter* of this Reſolution, what it was that he *ſaid,* that he reſolved upon. Which we have here

ſet forth, firſt in a *General*, then in a *Particular* way. In *General*, he reſolved to look to his *ways*; In *Particular*, to his *Tongue*, that he might not ſin with it. *I ſaid, I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my tongue.* Upon theſe I ſhall inſiſt ſeverally, beginning with the former, his *General Reſolution.*

{General. Particular.}

His General Reſolution.

I ſaid, I will take heed to my ways.

Explication. And what doth *David* here mean by his *ways?* And how doth he ſay that he would *take heed* to them? I ſhall open theſe ſeverally and briefly, by way of *Explication.*

Q. 1. What meant by his ways? The whole courſe of his life.

My ways.] What *ways?* Why, hereby underſtand we *generally* his whole *courſe*, the courſe of his life: In *particular*, all his *Counſels*, *Actions*, *Words*; all which, in Scripture-language, are comprehended under this word, *ways.* So they are, being referred to *God*, whoſe *Counſels* are called his *Ways*; *How unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* (ſaith *Paul*, ſpeaking of Gods *Counſels*, which are the Rule of his proceedings and actings) *Rom.* 11.33. And ſo are his *Works*; his works of *Mercy* or *Judgment*, his Bleſſings or Puniſhments: *The Lord is righteous in all his ways*, Pſal. 145. 17. in all his diſpenſations and dealings with the ſons of men, which are his *Providential ways*, whereby he cometh unto us. And ſo alſo are his *Words*, his *Precepts*: *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 25. 4. *Then will I teach tranſgreſſours thy ways*, (ſaith he)

he) Pſal. 51.13. *He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths*, Iſa. 2.3. his Commandments, which are called his *ways*, in as much as they are layed out by him, and they lead unto him And ſo in like manner it may be applyed unto *man*; whoſe *Counſels*, *Actions*, *Words*, may be, and often are called his *ways*; in as much as he being a *Traveller* here upon earth, theſe lead him to his journies end, either to *Heaven*, or *Hell*. According to which there are two ſorts of ways, *good* and *evil* ways; the way of the Godly, and ungodly; both which we find put together in that one verſe, wherewith *David* concluſeth his firſt *Pſalm*, *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly ſhall periſh.* Pſal. 1. 6. And in this general ſence underſtand we the word in the Text, where *David* ſaith he would *take heed to his ways*, that is, to the whole courſe of his life; all his *Councels*, *Actions*, *Words*.

And how would he *take heed* to them? *Anſw.* *Eſhmerah*, *Cuſtodiam*, *Obſervabo*; I will keep them, obſerve them, look to them, watch over them, take heed to them. The word imports a careful and diligent circumſpection, and warineſs, for the preventing of ſome evil which one is obnoxious to, and in danger of. Therefore is it that our Saviour puts theſe two words together, *Luk.* 12.15. *Take heed, and beware of covetouſneſs.* Ὁρᾶτε καὶ φυλάσσεσθε, look to it, and keep your ſelves from the danger of it, from being tainted or infected with it. And thus *David* ſaith here that he would *take heed* to his ways, looking to

Q. 2. How he would take heed to them.

them for the right ordering of them; being vigilant over himself, and careful that he might not miscarry, by doing ought that might be justly offensive and displeasing, whether to God or man.

Observ. Christians to be circumspect over all their ways.

And *so Circumspect and wary all others ought to be*; that is the *observation* I take up from hence. This is that which the Lord requireth of his people *Israel*, Exod. 23.13. *In all things that I have said unto you be ye circumspect.* And the same the *Apostle* puts all Christians in mind of, *Eph.* 5.15. *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.* Fools they walk carelessly, though it be in slippery ways, or upon dangerous precipices, not foreseeing the danger which thereby they are exposed unto. But wise men will have a regard both to their ways and feet, to choose that which is right and good, and to decline that which is wrong and dangerous; they take heed to their ways. And so will they do who are spiritualy wise, *wise unto salvation*, they will thus take heed, and look to their ways. This is the condition upon which *God* covenanted with his servant *David*, that he would perpetuate his Kingdom in his line, continuing it in his posterity; of which *David*, being himself ready to die, puts his Son *Solomon* in mind, 1 *King.* 2.4. and *Solomon* remembring it afterwards, upon a solemn occasion, at the dedication of the Temple, maketh mention of it, *Cap* 8.25. *If* (saith he) *thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth, with all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee a man to sit on*

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the Throne of Iſrael. This *David* himſelf had reſolved to do, and did; and the like the Lord requires that his poſterity ſhould do, that they ſhould herein *Patrizare*, imtiate and reſemble their Father, to do as he had done, without which they could have no aſſurance to ſucceed him in his Kingdom. And upon this condition it is that God hath promiſed his heavenly Kingdom to the *ſpiritual ſeed of David*, if they ſhall in like manner reſolve and endeavour to do what he did, to take heed, and look to their ways, for the right ordering of the whole courſe of their lives, ſo as to walk according to the rule of his Word. This was the thing which *David* earneſtly deſired, the thus ordering of his courſe: And thereupon he maketh it his requeſt unto God, that he would do it for him. *Order my ſteps in thy word*, Pſal. 119.133. A thing which God doth for all that are his, ſuch as are truely godly. *The ſteps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*, Pſal. 37. 23. God directing and inclining his heart to look to his ways, and to order them; which the righteous man doth. It is the Character which the Lord giveth of ſuch a one, he is one that ordereth his converſation: Pſal. 50. 23. *To him that ordereth his converſation aright will I ſhew the ſalvation of God:* be unto him both a temporal and eternal Saviour. Now this cannot be done without great circumſpection, warineſs, watchfulneſs, without taking heed to a mans ways. A thing very needful for all, as we may ſee upon divers accounts.

R. 1. There are many By-way's.

1. In as much as there are many *by-ways*, *falſe-ways*. Such are all ſinful ways. *I hate every falſe way* (ſaith *David*) *i.e.* every ſinful way, *Pſal.*119.104,128. And ſuch are mens *own ways*, thoſe ways and courſes which by nature they are inclined to take and chooſe. *They have choſen their own ways*, Iſa. 66. 3. Such as ſeem good in their own eyes; but being ſinful they lead to death and deſtruction: *There is a way which ſeemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*, Prov.14.12. Now upon this account men had need to be wary and circumſpect, to *take heed to their ways*. Were it ſo that a *Traveller* in his journey had but *one way* before him, and that an *eaſie*, and *broad* way; now he ſhould not need to be very heedful, but might go on with leſs care, and let looſe the reins to the horſe whereon he rides. But where there is but *one right way*, and that a *narrow* one; and many *by-ways*, and thoſe *broad* ones, now he had need to look about him, to take heed to his way that he miſs it not So ſtands the caſe here; *Gods way*, which is the *right way*, which leadeth to Heaven is but *one* way, and that a *narrow* one; but the Devils ways, leading to Hell, they are *many*, altogether making up a *broad way*. So our Saviour deſcribeth them, *Mat.*7.13,14. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction; but ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life.* Now upon this account all had need to take heed to their ways, that they miſtake not the wrong for the right. Such a miſtake we read of in the King of *Syria's* Army,

Army, 2 *King.* 6. 20. Being ſent to find out *Eliſha*, they following his direction, and he being unknown to them, thought they were going to *Dothan*, where they made account to find him, when as they marched to *Samaria*, not knowing where they were, till came within the walls of the City, into the hands of their enemies, Thus are carnal ſouls often miſtaken; whilſt they think they are going the way to heaven, they are poſting to hell, never knowing ſo much, till they come there; which miſtakes they they are ſubject to upon the like accounts that thoſe *Syrians* were. Of whoſe miſcarriage we find two cauſes aſſigned, both mentioned in the two verſes there foregoing. 1. *They were ſmitten with blindneſs, ver.* 18. whether in the eyes of their *Bodies*, or *minds*, or both, it is not agreed; however, ſo dazled they were, as that they did not rightly diſcern of things; as not of the *perſon* to whom they ſpake, who was that perſon whom they ſought for, ſo not of the *way* whither they went. And ſecondly, they were miſled by their *Guide*; which was the Prophet himſelf, the perſon whom they ſought after, who ſpeaking to them ambiguouſly, in ſuch a ſence as they underſtood not, tells them, *This is not the way, neither is this the City*; (meaning the place where they ſhould find him, he having then left *Dothan*, and was going to *Samaria*, whither he led them) *follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you ſeek, but he led them to Samaria*, v. 19. Thus came they to be miſtaken. And by the like means come Carnal ſouls to be miſtaken about

Carnal ſouls ſubject to miſtake their way, as the *Syrian* Army did.

about the way wherein they go, being

1. Being blinded with Ignorance; having blinded themselves.

1. *Blinded*, though not in their *Bodies*, yet in their *Souls*, having their minds blinded with ignorance. So ſaith *Paul* of the *Gentiles*, giving this as a Reaſon, why they walked as they did, in the *vanity of their mind*; *Having* (ſaith he) *the underſtanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſs of their heart*, Eph. 4.17,18. And hence it is that carnal ſouls walk as they do, going on in the ways of ſin and death, becauſe they walk in darkneſs. *He that walketh in darkneſs knoweth not whither he goeth*, (ſaith our Saviour) Joh.12.35. Thus St. *John*, ſpeaking of the malicious perſon, renders this as the Reaſon of his hating his Brother, 1 *Joh.* 2. 11. *He that hateth his brother is in darkneſs, and walketh in darkneſs, and knoweth not whither he goeth, becauſe darkneſs hath blinded his eyes.* And ſo is it with wicked and ungodly men, who being in their natural condition, are in *darkneſs*, being ignorant of what they ought to know, having their eyes blinded with ſinful and inordinate luſts, ſo as they walk in darkneſs, living wickedly and ungodlily, going on in a continued courſe of ſin, not knowing whither they go, that they are going to Hell.

Blinded by Satan.

And as they are by nature thus blind, having blinded themſelves, ſo they are blinded by *Satan*. *In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not*, 2 Cor.4.4. *Satan*, the *Prince of darkneſs*, who is called *The God of this world*, Ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, even

as elſewhere he is called the *Prince* of it, *Joh.*12. 31, in as much as he ruleth and governeth a great part of it, yea, the greateſt part, even all unregenerate perſons; who being the far greater part, are called ὁ κόσμος ὅλος, *the whole world*, *The whole world lieth in wickedneſs*, 1 Joh.5.19. In this world he ruleth; and he is ſerved, worſhiped, and obeyed, by the men of the world, as a *God*; he *blindeth the minds of them that believe not.* They firſt ſhutting their own eyes againſt the light, are, by the judgment of God, given up unto *Satan*, to be further blinded by him. Upon which account it is that *God* himſelf is ſaid to have blinded their eyes, *Joh.*12.40. *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they ſhould not ſee with their eyes, nor underſtand with their heart.* *He*, that is, *God*, who in his juſt judgment giveth up obdurate ſinners unto the will and power of *Satan*, that the eyes of their ſouls ſhould be blinded by him, as he did thoſe *Syrians* to the will of *Eliſha*, ſo as at his Prayer they were ſmitten with blindneſs.

2. And being thus blinded, they are alſo *miſled* by the *Guides* which they follow. So were thoſe *Syrians* by following *Eliſha*, who (as you have heard) led them to *Samaria* inſtead of *Dothan*. And in the like manner are carnal ſouls miſled, by following ſuch guides as lead them out of the right way. Of vvhich *falſe guides* there are many. 2. Miſ-led by their Guides which they follow.

1. The firſt and principal vvhereof is *Satan*. By him it vvas that our *firſt Parents* vvere miſled, by hearkening to his ſuggeſtions they vvere turned 1. Satan.

turned out of the right vvay. And by the like means come their children to be miſ-led, by hearkening to him, his ſuggeſtians, his temptations, hearkening to him, and following of him. *Ye are of your facher the Devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do,* (ſaith our Savour to the Jews) *Joh.*8.44. Thus are carnal ſouls ſeduced by this *old Serpent*, Satan, vvho as at the firſt he aſſumed that ſhape, ſo he is ſince ſo called from the qualities of that creature, being a ſubtil ſeducer, vvho by his windings and turnings draws unwary ſouls out of their way.

2. His Inſtruments ſeducing them

2. Under him are his *Inſtruments*; ſuch as being ſeduced themſelves, are inſtrumental in the ſeducing of others. Which is done two vvays, by *Doctrine*, or *Example*.

1. By Doctrine.

1. By *Doctrine*. Such *ſeducers* there ever have been, ſome in all ages; *Falſe Teachers, Evil men and ſeducers, deceiving and being deceived*, (as the Apoſtle ſets them forth) 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. *Seducing Spirits*, (as he calls them) 1 *Tim* 4.1. To whom (as he there ſaith) *Some in the latter times giving heed ſhall depart from the faith*; turning aſide from the true doctrine of the Goſpel, to the embracing of Errours and Hereſies; dangerous and damnable. Such a *Seducer* vvas that wicked woman *Jezebel*, vvhich *calling her ſelf a Propheteſs*, taught others to be like her ſelf, *to commit fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed to Idols*, as it is charged upon her, *Rev.* 2. 20. And ſuch ſeducers (as I ſaid) there ever have been. Such vvere the *Phariſees* of old, vvhom our Saviour calleth *blind leaders of the blind*, Mat. 15. 14.

And

And if the blinde lead the blinde, both ſhall fall into the ditch. And ſuch there are not a few at this day; vvho inſtead of *turning men from darkneſs to light* (vvhich is the vvork of the Miniſters of Chriſt, as it was St. *Pauls*, Act. 26. 18.) they turn them from Light to Darkneſs, from Truth to Error, from Religion to Superſtition.

2. And as there are ſeducers by Doctrine, ſo by *Example:* Leading perſons, whoſe Example is made a Rule for others to walk by, who following of them are often miſ-led by them. Thus were many of the *Jews*, and *Barnabas* amongſt the reſt, carried away by *Peters* diſſimulation, drawn by his example to do as he did, to withdraw their communion with the believing Gentiles, and ſo to turn *Separatiſts*, Gal. 2. 12, 13. Thus are men ſeduced, and drawn aſide, by following theſe *falſe guides*; the *Doctrine* and *Example* of others. 2. By Example.

3. And to theſe let me add the following of carnal *Senſe* and *Reaſon*; which is all the Guide that many do follow. They are led by their ſenſual appetites; or if they conſult with *Reaſon*, it is with carnal Reaſon, no other then what the Fleſh dictates; ſo doing what is good in their own eyes. Now following ſuch *Guides*, no wonder if men be miſ-led. 3. Carnal Senſe and Reaſon.

3. And ſo (in the third place) they often are by the *things which they ſeek after.* Even as it was with thoſe *Syrians*, they were miſ-led by the perſon whom they ſought for, ſo are carnal men by the things which they ſeek after. The men of the world being drawn aſide by the things of the vvorld, 3. By the things which they ſeek after.

world; especially those three things which St. *John* puts together, under them comprehending *all that is in the World*, Πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, that is, All that the men of the world look upon as worth looking after, all that is of account and esteem with them, *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*, 1 Joh. 2. 16. *Pleasures, wealth, and Honours*, these are the things which their eyes are chiefly upon; which whilest they are, no wonder if they be drawn aside unto by-ways, crooked ways.

4. By the Company going along with them.

4. And as they are thus mis-led by the guides which they follow, and things which they seek after, so by the *Company* going along with them, which, in this broad way, is very numerous. So our Saviour tells us, in that Text fore-cited, *Matt.* 7. 13. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat:* Whereas (as it there followeth) *Streight is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that finde it.* Now men are inclined to go with the crowd, to follow the multitude: Whereupon it is that the Lord giveth an expres Law against it, *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.* This men naturally are prone and subject to; and upon this account again they are apt to mistake their way.

5. The Deceitfulness of sinful ways.

5. To these yet add a fifth; The ways of sin are *deceitful ways*: So the Apostle calleth all sinfull lusts, *Ephes.* 4. 22. ἐπιθυμίας τῆς ἀπάτης, *Lusts of deceit*, deceitful lusts; so called in regard of their alluring and enticing nature, not performing what they promise, deceiving the expectations

ons of thoſe that hearken to them, promiſing much ſweetneſs and contentment, vvhereas, in the end, they prove bitter to the ſoul. Like to that *Lotos Homeriea* (as *Grotius*, writing upon that Text, maketh the compariſon) the *Lote-tree* mentioned by *Homer*, the Root vvhereof is ſweet, but the Fruit bitter. So ſaith the *Wiſe-man* of the adulterous woman, *Prov.* 5. 3. *The lips of a ſtrange woman drop as an honey-comb*, &c. *But her end is bitter as wormwood.* Such is the deceitfulneſs of ſin, vvhereby men come to be drawn into it, and hardned in it. Whereupon the Apoſtle willeth Chriſtians not onely to take heed to themſelves, but to each other, *Heb.* 3. 13. *Exhort one another*, &c. *leſt any of you be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.* By theſe, and many other like vvays and means, carnal ſouls come to be ſeduced, to be drawn into, and carried on in their ſinful vvays and courſes.

2. And not onely they, but even *Gods own Children*, ſuch as have choſen the right vvay, (vvhich *David* ſaith he had done; *I have choſen the way of truth*, Pſal. 119. 30. the vvay of Gods Commandements, *I have choſen thy precepts*, verſ. 113.) deſiring and reſolving to vvalk therein; yet they are alſo ſubject to miſcarry, to *Slip*, to *Stumble*, to *Fall*.

2 Gods own Children ſubject to miſcarry in their way.

1. To *ſlip*. This *David* had experience of in himſelf, vvho, conflicting vvith a Temptation, tells us, Pſal. 73. 2. *As for me, my feet were almoſt gone, my ſteps had well-nigh ſlipped.* Whileſt he beheld the proſperity of the vvicked, how it fared vvith them far better in outward reſpects then vvith

1. To ſlip.

vvith himſelf, and others vvho vvere truly godly; he vvas even ready to diſtruſt God, and murmur againſt him, to quarrel with his diſpenſations. And ſuch *ſlips* the beſt of Saints are ſubject to; their *feet* being *weak*; ſo as if left to themſelves, they are ready to ſlip through infirmity.

2. To ſtumble.

2. And as to ſlip, ſo to *ſtumble*, there being many ſtumbling-blocks vvhich they may meet vvith in their vvay, many offences, many diſcouragements, vvhich are caſt in their vvay to ſtop or hinder their courſe. *It muſt needs be that offences come*, (ſaith our Saviour) *Matth.* 18.7. Σκανδαλα, *Scandals*, ſtumbling-blocks, lets and hinderances to a Chriſtian in his vvay. Ἀνάγκη ἐστιν, it muſt *needs be* that they come, *viz. Neceſſitate conſequentiæ*, by a neceſſity of conſequence, in regard of the great vvickedneſs that is in the vvorld. God alſo, for the tryal of his people, and other ends beſt known to himſelf, permitting that it ſhould be ſo. And as offences, ſo *Diſcouragements*. Thus it is ſaid of the *Iſraelites*, vvhen they vvere to go into the Land of Promiſe, *The ſoul of the people was much diſcouraged becauſe of the way*, Numb. 21.4 in regard of the many vvants and troubles vvhich they met vvith in the Wilderneſs, of ſome of vvhich they there complain in the Verſe following. And ſuch diſcouragements Gods people meet vvith in their vvay to Heaven, that being a vvay that is *evil ſpoken of*, and they vvho vvalk in it *ſpoken againſt*. So the *Jews* tell *Paul*, vvhen he came to *Rome* to preach the Goſpel to them there, *Act.* 28. 22. *Concerning this ſect* (ſay they, meaning the Profeſſion

feſſion of Chriſtianity) *we know that every where it is ſpoken againſt*; both among Jews and Gentiles. And ſo it is with the *practice* of true *Piety*; they who will walk in Gods way, and walk ἀκριβῶς, *exactly* and *preciſely* in it, they muſt make account to meet with reproaches and obloquies, to be blaſphemed and evil ſpoken of by the men of the world, to meet with *tongue-perſecution*. And not that alone, but *hand-perſecution* alſo. *Yea and all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 *Tim.*3.12. This is the portion which they muſt make account to meet with in, and from the world. They who will walk in Gods way muſt look to meet with many rubs, many hindrances, many diſcouragements; and withal, many *temptations*, which are the *Devils ſtumbling-blocks*, which he caſteth before them. As it is ſaid of *Balaam*, that *he taught Balac to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the children of Iſrael*, Rev.2.14. which he did by ſetting fair and beautiful women before them, who being themſelves both corporal and ſpiritual adulterers, might entice them *to eat things ſacrificed to Idols, and to commit fornication*. Such temptations the beſt of Saints may, and often do meet with, which are to them as ſtumbling blocks in their way, ſo as if they take not heed to their feet, and to their way, they are in danger of ſtumbling.

3. Yea, and not onely of ſtumbling, but of *falling*, to fall even into foul and ſcandalous ſins. Which ſome of the beſt Saints have had ſad experience of. For which we ſhall need no other inſtance but that of *David*; who though he were *a* 3. To fall.

man after Gods own heart, one that had choſen the right way, and was reſolved to walk in it, which alſo he had done, yet how did he fall! how fouly, how fearfully!

3. Seeming Saints ſubject to turn aſide and turn back.

3. And as for *ſeeming Saints*, they are ſubject to *turn aſide*, and to *turn back*: Not onely to ſlip, and fall into ſome particular ſin, or ſins, but wholly to forſake their former courſe, ſo as to live in a courſe of known ſin, againſt light, againſt conſcience. It is that which the Lord complains of, againſt the people of *Iſrael*, to his ſervant *Moſes*, Deut. 9. 12. *Thy people which thou haſt brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themſelves, they are quickly turned aſide out of the way which I commanded them.* Such Apoſtacy have many eminent Profeſſours been found guilty of. Even as *Paul* tells *Timothy* concerning *Phygellus* and *Hermogenes*, and the generality of his friends in *Aſia*, 2 Tim. 1. 15. *This thou knoweſt, that all they which are in Aſia be turned away from me*, &c. having no more communion with him, nor owning him as they had done. Even ſo deal *Profeſſors* ſometimes with their God, turning away from him, yea, turning their backs upon him, renouncing and forſaking that faith which they have profeſſed, and walking contrary to what they have done. Such *Apoſtates* were *Hymeneus* and *Alexander*, of whom *Paul* tells *Timothy*, how that having *put away a good conſcience*, (letting looſe the reins to a licentious courſe of living) they had alſo *made ſhipwrack of the faith*, of the Doctrine of faith, which they had caſt over-board, being drowned in damnable Errors and Hereſies,

1 Tim.

1 *Tim.* 1. 19. And the like he ſaith of *Demas*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. *Demas hath forſaken me, having loved this preſent world*, preferring his profit, and honour, and ſecurity, before his Religion. And ſo St. *Peter* tells us of ſome, who *having known the way of righteouſneſs turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; So as it happened unto them according to the true Proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire*, 2 Pet. 2. 21, 22. Inſtances of the like Apoſtacy we have many in Scripture, yea, of ſome who were *real Saints*. Amongſt which that of *Solomon* is very remarkable, who in his old age fell to *Idolatry*, as we have it recorded, 1 *King.* 11. 4, 6. *For it came paſs when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods*, &c. *And Solomon did evil in the ſight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father.* Thus may *Profeſſors*, nay *Saints*, ſuch as are really and eminently ſo, (as *Solomon* was) be guilty of *Apoſtacy*. Though not of a *total* and *final*, (which may not be charged upon *Solomon*, of whoſe repentance that book of *Retractations* by him penn'd in his latter days, his book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, beareth ſufficient witneſs; and from which real Saints, having the ſeed of grace abiding in them, are through grace preſerved and kept) yet of that which may be dreadful; ſo as they may ſeem to be even in a deſperate condition; Not unlike that young man *Eutychus*, who *falling from the third loft was taken up dead*, or *for dead*, (as it may be conſtrued) *Act* 20. 9. Even ſo may it

Real Saints ſubject to Apoſtacy.

be with them, falling (as he did) from the *third loft*, from an eminent degree of piety and ſanctity, they may be taken up for dead. Though the life of grace be ſtill in them, (as *Paul* ſaith of him when he was raiſing him up, *Trouble not your ſelves, for his life is in him*, v. 10.) yet they may be ſeemingly dead, there being no pulſe, no breath, no ſenſe or motion to be felt or found in them. Now even Gods Saints being ſubject to ſuch defections, great Reaſon why they ſhould do what *David* here ſaith he reſolved upon, *look to their ways.*

Chriſt ans to have a ſpecial care of themſelves in times of adverſity.

Which as they are to do, at all times, ſo ſpecially in *times of adverſity*: Such was the time wherein *David* took up this reſolution. *I ſaid* (ſaith he) *I will take heed to my ways.* And when was it that he ſaid ſo? Why, it was in the time of his diſtreſs, when he was in great trouble and danger, flying before his ſon *Abſalom* (as is ſuppoſed.) At ſuch times Gods people had need to ſet a ſpecial watch, to take ſpecial heed, as to their *hearts*, ſo to their *ways*; as to their *thoughts*, ſo to their *words* and *actions.* And that becauſe then they are expoſed to many temptations. Their *hearts* being now *hot within them* (as *David* ſaith it was with him, *v.* 3.) the fire, if not looked to, whilſt it burneth inwardly with ſecret diſcontents, it will be ready to break forth outwardly, their ſpirits being ready to vent their paſſions in murmurings and repinings. Even as the *Iſraelites* when they came to drink of the waters of *Marah*, which were *bitter waters*, now *they murmured againſt Moſes, ſaying what ſhall we drink?*

Exod.

Exod. 15. 23, 24. Even ſo, Gods people, when they are brought to the like condition, to drink ſuch bitter waters, the waters of Affliction, they will be ſubject to murmuring, and that not onely againſt Inſtruments, but againſt God himſelf; (of which more hereafter.) And being thus ſubject to tranſgreſs with their *tongues*, they will be ready to do the like in their *Actions*, by uſing indirect and unwarrantable ways and means for their own ſuccour and relief. At ſuch times they will be ready to betake themſelves to *By-ways*. Even as *Deborah*, in her Song, ſaith of the *Iſraelites*, Judg, 5. how that *in the days of* Shamgar *and* Jael *the high-ways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-ways*, verſ. 6. The time then being troubleſome and dangerous, ſo as it was no ſafe travelling in the Road-ways, for fear of Enemies and Robbers, men having neceſſary employments left them, and betook themſelves to crooked ways, by-ways: Even ſo is it in times of adverſity and trouble; nature conſulting its own ſafety and ſecurity, will be ready to finde out *by-ways*, to put men upon the uſe of ſome indirect and unwarrantable ways and means for their deliverance. So was it with the Children of *Iſrael*, when they had heard what an evil report their *Spies*, whom they had ſent forth, had brought of the Land of *Canaan*, telling them what dangers they were like to encounter with, and what hardſhips they muſt make account to endure, preſently *they ſaid one to another, Let us make a Captain, and let us return into* Egypt, *Numb.* 14. 4. Thus their great paſſion put them upon *Rebellion*

againſt *God* and his ſervant *Moſes*, and upon a very mad deſign, which muſt needs have proved deſtructive to themſelves, if they had proſecuted it. And ſo was it with King *Saul*, when he was in that great ſtreight, the *Philiſtims* coming up againſt him with a numerous Army, and many of his own men for fear forſaking him, *flying to caves, and thickets, and rocks, to hide themſelves*, and *Samuel*, with whom he ſhould have conſulted, not returning to him according to his expectation, now he falls upon *offering a burnt-ſacrifice*, (as we have the Story) 1 *Sam.* 13. 9. Which, whether it was done by himſelf (as ſome conceive,) or by the *Prieſts* which were with him, (which is more probable,) yet was it in him an unwarrantable act, he having no advice or direction from God ſo to do. And afterwards, being in the like ſtreight, aſſaulted by the ſame Enemy, (as we have it, *cap.* 28.) which *when he ſaw he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled*, Verſ. 5. and receiving no anſwer from the Lord to direct him what to do, *verſ.* 6. now he repairs to the *Witch* at *Endor*, to conſult with her, (as we there finde it, in the Verſes following.) Thus do many, in their ſtreights; when God ſeemeth to forſake them, they forſake him, and betake themſelves to the *Devil*; turning back, or turning aſide into ſinful and unwarrantable ways and courſes, doing that out of fear which at other times they were reſolved againſt. So was it with *Peter* and the reſt of the *Apoſtles*, who, notwithſtanding that they had all engaged to ſtick cloſe to their Lord and Maſter Chriſt, *Though I ſhould die with thee, yet will*

will I not deny thee, (ſaith *Peter*;) *Likewiſe alſo ſaid all the Diſciples,* Matth. 26. 35. Yet ſoon after, when they ſaw thoſe who came to apprehend him in the Garden, *Then all the Diſciples forſook him, and fled,* (as it followeth,) *verſ.* 56. And *Peter* himſelf, who afterwards followed him into the High Prieſts Hall, when he apprehended the danger that he was there in, being ſurprized with fear, he both denies and forſwears him, breaking forth into dreadful imprecations againſt himſelf, as we finde it, *verſ.* 74. Such miſcarriages are the beſt of Saints, in times of Temptation, ſubject to. And therefore great Reaſon that, as at all times, ſo ſpecially then, they ſhould do what *David* here reſolveth upon, *take heed to their ways.* Many other *Reaſons* might be added to theſe, but I ſhall content my ſelf with theſe, forbearing to proſecute the *Doctrinal* part any further, paſſing to the *Application.*

Which let it be directed two ways, by way of *Reprehenſion, Exhortation.*

Uſe 1. By way of Reprehenſion.

Firſt, By way of *Reprehenſion,* and that of all *Careleſs Chriſtians.* Of which there are divers ſorts.

1. Of ſuch are altogether Careleſs

1. Some *altogether Careleſs,* not taking heed to their ways at all, for the ordering of them, walking looſely, not regarding what way they take, whether right or wrong. This is that which the Lord chargeth upon *Judah,* Jer. 2. 23. where ſpeaking of her degenerating and revolting from him, and *going after Baalim,* turning to Idolatry, he ſaith to her, *Thou art a ſwift Dromedary traverſing her ways.* The *Dromedary,* a kind of ſwift

Camel, (from whence it hath that name given unto it, called *Dromas*, or *Dromeda*, from the Greek word Δρόμος, *curſus, ob curſus velocitatem, quâ maximè pollet*, from the ſwiftneſs of it wherein it excelleth) being let looſe it runneth wilde, this way and that way, not caring whither: And even ſo did the people of the *Jews*, the generality of them *traverſing their ways*, having no order or rule to regulate their Deſigns and Actions by; being *like a wild ſhe-aſs uſed to the wilderneſs*, (as it there followeth, in the next Verſe,) which at all times runs wilde, but in gendring times runs a madding after the male. Such was the courſe which that people took, very irregular and inordinate. And ſuch is the courſe which is taken by many who bear the name of Chriſtians, who never conſult with *Gods Word*, nor yet with their own *Reaſon*, about the ways wherein they walk; but letting looſe the reins to all kind of licentiouſneſs, take the way that is before them, be it what it will. So we find the Lord again complaining againſt that people, the people of the *Jews*, *Cap.* 8. of that Prophecy, *verſ.* 6. *Every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the Battel.* The head-ſtrong and fiery-metall'd Warhorſe, ſeeing or ſmelling the Battel, and hearing the Trumpet ſound, he with much violence maketh towards, and breaks in upon the Enemy, his Rider then having no more command over him, nor being able to keep him in. *He paweth in the valley, and rejoyceth in his ſtrength, he goeth on to meet the armed men*, (as we have it) *Job* 39.21. Even ſo was it with that people, they ran headlong

long after their own ſinfull luſts, following their own fancies and imaginations, and would not be curbed or reſtrained by any means which the Prophets of God could uſe. And ſo is it with many licentious perſons, who are ready to follow every Temptation: No ſooner do they hear the *Trumpet ſound*, having any occaſion of ſin offered to them which may be pleaſing and delightful to the fleſh, but preſently they ruſh upon it, be it what it will, never conſidering what will be the end thereof. Such is the careleſneſs of perſons *openly profane*; who ſin, and ſin *openly*; even as *Abſalom*, hearkening to *Achitophels* counſel, *went in to his Fathers Concubines upon the top of the houſe, in the ſight of all* Iſrael. 2 *Sam.*16.22. Being no more careful to hide and cover their ſin, then *Noah* was his nakedneſs when he was drunk. Now as for ſuch impudent ſinners, let them but hear what the Lord ſaith to thoſe among the *Jews* who were ſo, taking it home to themſelves, *Iſa.* 3. 9. *The ſhew of their countenance doth witneſs againſt them*, (their impiety and wickedneſs which they carry, as it were, graven in their fore-heads, and which they openly practiſe,) *and they declare their ſin as* Sodom, *they hide it not*; *Wo unto their ſoul, for they have rewarded evil unto themſelves.* Here is a firſt ſort.

2. A ſecond there are, who are *Careful*, but how? Not that they may not *ſin*, but that they may not be *ſeen*; Their care is onely that they may *walk in the dark*. So that ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* ſetteth forth the great and deſperate hypocriſie

2. Such as are careſull onely to hide their ſins.

criſie of thoſe wicked *Jews*, for which he denounceth Wo againſt them, *Iſai.* 29. 15. *Wo unto them that ſeek deep to hide their counſel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they ſay, Who ſeeth us, and who knoweth us?* So was it with the *Ancients of Iſrael*, touching whom the Lord ſpeaketh to his Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ezek. 8. 12. *Son of man, haſt thou ſeen what the Ancients of the houſe of Iſrael do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his Imagery?* There had they their moſt abominable Idolatries, in their ſecret Chambers. And even ſo is it with many ſecret ſinners; ſo long as they can but do it ſecretly, they care not what ſins they commit: So careful they are over their ſins, that, if it were in their power, they would hide them from God. In the mean time, if they may but hide them from *Men*, they care not how foul and horrid they be. Thus they care not what ways they walk in, ſo long as their foot-ſteps be not diſcovered: This is all their carefulneſs. As for the right ordering of their ways, the approving of their Counſels, Words, and Actions, unto God, that they regard not. Now as for ſuch, let them but hear what the Lord ſaid unto his ſervant *David* concerning that ſecret ſin of his which he had committed, his ſin of *Adultery*, 2 Sam. 12. 12. *Thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing before all Iſrael, and before the Sun.* *David* in committing of that ſin, (as Adulterers for the moſt part do) his care was to hide it, therein fearing Men more then God, and ſhame more then ſin; but the Lord telleth him, that for that ſecret ſin of his he would bring upon

upon him open ſhame and diſgrace. And let all ſecret ſinners expect the like; though their ſins now be hidden as to men, (for from God nothing is hidden, *all things being naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do,* (as the Apoſtle tells us) *Heb.* 4. 13.) yet (without repentance) their ſhame and puniſhment will be open, even before the whole World.

3. A third ſort there are, who are *Careful*, and careful of not *Sinning*, but not *ſo careful* as they ought to be, their care being but *Partial*, extending onely to *ſome Sins*, or *ſome Times*. 3. Such whoſe care is but partial.

1. *Some ſins*: As for *groſs* and *ſcandalous* ſins, as Drunkenneſs, Uncleanneſs, *&c.* theſe they are careful to avoid, taking heed that they fall not into them; but as for *leſſer ſins*, they fear them not. Thus it is with them clean contrary to what our Saviour ſaith of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *Matth.* 23. 24. They *ſtrained at a Gnat, but ſwallowed a Camel*, making ſcruple of ſmall things, but uot caring for the main: but theſe, though they ſtrain at a *Camel*, yet not ſo at a *Gnat*. Though great ſins will not, yet ſmall ones are eaſily ſwallowed by them, ſo as they give way to them, giving indulgence and allowance to themſelves in them. Little ſins to them are as *no ſins*, or, at the moſt, but *venial*, and therefore they will not trouble themſelves about them. As *Lot* ſaid of his *Zoar*, whither he deſired to go, *Is it not a little one?* Gen. 19. 20. little in *circuit*, (from whence it had that name given it, of *Zoar*, or *Tzoar*, which ſignifieth a ſmall place,) and little in *ſin* comparatively, and ſo looked upon by *Lot*, 1. Of ſome ſins.

as

as not deſerving the like puniſhment that thoſe other Cities did, which, in both thoſe reſpects, far exceeded it. Even ſo do many look upon their *ſins*, being but little ones; they think and hope they may finde ſafety in them, and therefore take liberty to commit them: But let ſuch know, what ſooner or later they will finde, that *no ſin is little*. Though little in *Mans* eye, yet not in *Gods*; and though little in compariſon of ſome others, yet not ſo in it ſelf. Not the leaſt ſin, but, being committed againſt an infinite Majeſty, is of an infinite nature, deſerving no leſs then an infinite weight of Judgment, which they who ſhall willingly and wilfully allow themſelves in, muſt make account to feel.

2. At ſome times.

2. *Some times*; It may be, in the day of adverſity, when God calleth their ſins to remembrance, and ſetteth them before them, then they will bethink themſelves what they have done, how they have offended God by their ſinful ways and courſes, taking up reſolutions to be more wary for the future, to take heed to their ways, that they fall not into the like ſins hereafter: But no ſooner is the ſtorm over, but they return to their former courſe again, forgetting God and themſelves. As the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith of the *Iſraelites*, that when God had brought them through the Red-Sea, they *ſoon forgat his works, they waited not for his counſel*. Pſal. 106. 13. Even ſo is it with many, who being to paſs through a red-ſea of afflictions and troubles, now they will hearken to the Counſel of God; but being paſſed through it, now they forgat his works and their own; what he hath done for them,

them, and what they have engaged and ought to do for him; no longer hearkening to his Counſels. Let all ſuch know, that God will not be thus requited, thus mocked.

4. Others there are (in the fourth place) who *walk ſecurely*, preſuming that they are in the right way, they hold on their courſe, without inquiring into their ways, not examining and conſidering them, not fearing any danger, any miſcarriage. Of this ſort too many, who are herein too like to the inhabitants of *Laiſh*, of whom it is ſaid that *they dwelt careleſs and ſecure*, *Judg.* 18. 7. even ſo do they walk, ſecurely, and careleſly, not ſuſpecting themſelves, not apprehending any danger. A dangerous condition! So it proved to that City, which being ſo careleſs was ſuddenly ſurprized, as it there followeth, *verſ.* 27 *They* (the ſix hundred men ſent to that purpoſe, *ver.* 11.) *came unto Laiſh, unto a people that were at quiet and ſecure, and they ſmote them with the edge of the ſword, and burnt the City with fire.* And the like muſt ſuch careleſs ſouls, who go on ſo ſecurely, look for, to be in like manner ſurprized by Satan, and to be taken captive by him.

4. Such as walk ſecurely.

5. To theſe add a fifth ſort; Such as for their general courſe do walk in the right way, but yet they do not walk ſo *warily*, ſo watchfully, ſo circumſpectly as they ought to do, not taking heed to all their particular ways, not weighing their *words*, not trying their *actions* ſo exactly as they ought to do, not looking to their *feet*, by reaſon whereof they have ſad and frequent experiences of

5. Such as are not ſo wary as they ought to be.

of their infirmities, being ſubject to ſlip, to ſtumble, and fall, which they often do. And of this ſort how many? Yea, who is there that may not be ranked amongſt them? Who are there that are ſo vigilant and watchfull over themſelves, ſo taking heed to their ways as they ought to do! Even the *five wiſe Virgins* in the Parable, (as well as the *fooliſh*) *whilſt the Bridegroom tarried, they all ſlumbred and ſlept*, Mat. 25.5. Good men are at ſome times more negligent and careleſs then they ſhould be. Every one of us bring theſe particulars home to our ſelves, and I ſuppoſe there is none of us but will find our ſelves within the compaſs of ſome one or other of them.

Uſe 2. Exhortation. Which whilſt we do, now ſuffer a word of *Exhortation:* We have heard what *Davids reſolution* was; now herein propound we him as a *Pattern for our Imitation*: what he reſolved upon, let us practiſe; being thus cautious and watchful over our ſelves, *taking heed to our ways*, to the whole courſe of our lives, and to all the motions in it, all our Actions, Words, Counſels.

Chriſtians exhorted to take heed to all their ways.

The Reaſons aforeſaid made uſe of as motives. To which end reflect we upon thoſe *Reaſons* before given in, making uſe of them as ſo many motives and inducements to put us upon this work. There being ſo many *by-ways*, *falſe-ways*, all making up a *broad way*, into which men are apt and prone to turn aſide, as by reaſon of their natural *blindneſs*, ſo of the *falſe guides* which go before them, the things which they *ſeek after*, and the *company* which goeth along with them: And thoſe ways being *flattering* and *deceitful* ways, ſo as

as even the beſt of Gods Saints are ſubject to ſlip, to ſtumble and fall, to turn aſide, and turn back, yea, and if not upheld by the power of divine grace, to fall away totally and finally, which ſome eminent profeſſors have done. Let all theſe ſerve to make us cautious and watchful, to look to our ways, to take heed of them. To which divers other *Conſiderations* may yet be adjoyned; as

A two-fold Conſideration propounded.

1. That *God taketh notice of all our ways. He knoweth the way that I take,* (ſaith *Job*) *Job* 23. 10. So he doth, not onely taking notice of the *general* way wherein we walk, the courſe of our lives, *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, Pſal.*1.6. but of all our *particular* ways, all our actions, words, and thoughts. *Doth not he ſee my ways, and count all my ſteps,* (ſaith *Job*) *Job.*31.4 *All my ways are before thee,* (ſaith *David*) *Pſal.*119.168. And again, *Pſal.*139.3. *Thou compaſſeſt my pathes, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.* And to the ſame purpoſe *Solomon*, Prov.5.21. *The ways of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Many other Texts might be brought in, ſpeaking to the ſame purpoſe; but this is a truth not to be queſtioned, neither can it be doubted of. He who knoweth the *hearts* of all men, ſeeth all their *ways. Mine eyes are upon all their ways*, Jer.16.17. So as there is not any deviation, any fall, any ſtumbling, any ſlip, but he taketh notice of it. And O what cauſe then have we to look to our ways, which are thus obſerved, and taken notice of by him to whom we muſt be accountable for our walking, for all actions, words, and thoughts!

1. Gods taking notice of all their ways.

2. And

2. They ſhall be rewarded according to them.

2. And (ſecondly) as the eyes of the Lord are upon them, ſo he will *reward us according to them. Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the ſons of men, to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings,* (ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*, in his Prayer) *Jer.*32.19. God is not an idle ſpectator, but a ſtrict obſerver of what men do, or ſay, taking exact notice of all their courſes and carriages, he will accordingly proſper, or puniſh them. *I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reins, to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings,* Jer.17.10. *I will recompence them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands,* Cap.25.14. *Thou rendereſt to every man according to his work,* Pſal.62.12. This will God do, either *here*, or *hereafter*. Oft-times *here*, in this life, God returneth ſuch recompences unto men, ſuitable to their ways, to their doings, *proſpering* them for their *well-doing*. It is rendred as the reaſon of *Jothams* proſpering in his Reign, 2 *Chron.* 27.6. *So Jotham became mighty, becauſe he prepared* (or *ordered*) *his ways before the Lord his God. Puniſhing* them for their *miſcarriages*. Thus it is ſaid of the wicked, that they have *their way brought upon their own head*, 1 King.8.32. *Therefore the Lord knoweth their works*, (ſaith *Elihu*) *and he overturneth them in the night, ſo that they are deſtroyed; He ſtriketh them as wicked men in the open ſight of others, Becauſe they turned back from him, and would not conſider any of his ways*, Job 34,25,26,27. But if not here, yet *hereafter*, at that great day of retribution

tribution, when men ſhall come to give an account of what they have done in the fleſh; then ſhall they receive the reward of their doings: *We muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt,* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or evil,* 2 Cor. 5. 10. whereof in the verſe following he maketh this uſe, *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men.* And ſuch uſe let me now make of it; from the conſideration hereof, perſwading all to take heed to their ways, inaſmuch as they muſt be accountable for them, and receive the recompence of them, which will either be *comfortable*, or *miſerable*. Such will the *end* of theſe *ways* be. If *right* ways, it will be comfortable. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace,* Pſal. 37. 37. *But* (as it there followeth, in the next verſe) *the tranſgreſſors ſhall be deſtroyed together, the end of the wicked ſhall be cut off,* v. 18. However their ſinful ways and courſes may be to them ſweet and pleaſant for the preſent, yet they will be bitter in the end. As *Abner* ſaid to *Joab* when he was hot in the purſuit and ſlaughter of his Brethren, *Knoweſt thou not* (ſaith he) *that it will be bitterneſs in the latter end?* 2 Sam. 2. 26. Even ſo may it be ſaid to all ſuch as follow their ſinful ways and courſes, know you not that they will be bitter in the latter end? whether you know it, or not, you will find it ſo. As it is with *luſcious meats*, which are ſweet in the mouth, but breeding Choler, they are bitter in the ſtomack; ſo is it with theſe

ſins, which are ſweet and pleaſant in the acting and committing, but when the ſoul hath throughly concocted them, and ſhall call them to remembrance, they will then be bitter and ſad. So ſaith *Solomon* of the ſin of *Adultery*, Prov. 5. 3, 4, 5. *The lips of a ſtrange woman* (a harlot) *drop as the honey-comb, and her mouth is ſmoother then oyl; But her end is bitter as wormwood, ſharp as the two-edged ſword; Her feet go down to death; her ſteps take hold on hell.* And the like may be ſaid of all other ſins, which (as we have heard) are flattering and deceitful, being pleaſing to the *fleſh*, but in the end they will prove bitter to the *ſoul*; yea, both to *ſoul* and *body*, which being partners in the acting ſhall be alſo ſharers in the puniſhment of them. Now, Oh that all would conſider this, what will be the end of their ſinful ways and courſes! *What will ye do in the end thereof?* (ſaith the Lord to thoſe wicked *Jews*) *Jer.* 5. 31. The thought hereof being ſeriouſly ſet on upon the ſoul, it could not but make men more careful of their walkings, to *take heed to their ways*, to all their *actions*, *words*, and *thoughts*, every of which is a ſtep either towards heaven, or hell, having a tendency thereunto.

To theſe I might yet ſubjoin ſome other *Motives*; but looking upon theſe as ſufficient, I ſhall paſs on to proſecute the *Exhortation* by way of *Direction*, ſhewing you how Chriſtians may come to be thus rightly cautious, ſo to take heed to their ways as they ought to do. For this,

Direct. 1. To ſee that their hearts be right with God.

1. *See that our hearts be right with God*, and that *his ways be in our hearts. Bleſſed is the man* (ſaith

ſaith *David*) *in whoſe heart are thy ways*, Pſal.84. 5. (ſo our former Tranſlation renders the words, much better then the latter, which reads it [*The ways of them*,] whereof Expoſitours can hardly find out any ſence.) *Thy ways*, Gods ways, the ways to his *Sanctuary*, to his houſe; Theſe ways ſome, dwelling afar of, could not travel; yet ſo long as thoſe ways were in their *hearts*, ſo as they hearily deſired to come to the Houſe of God, to worſhip him there at the time appointed, this God accepted and approved of; and *David* upon that account pronounceth them *bleſſed*. Now ſee that it be ſo with us: Though we cannot walk in Gods ways ſo exactly as we ought to do, yet ſee that his ways be in our *hearts*, that we have choſen them, as *David* ſaith he had done; *I have choſen the way of truth, thy judgments have I laid before me*, Pſal.119.30. *I have choſen thy precepts*, verſ.173. See that it be ſo with us, that our hearts be thus ſet right to God-ward, that our f ces look the right way, that it be our deſire and reſolution to walk in it all our days. *O Lord, I will walk in thy truth*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal.86. 11. which purpoſe and reſolution ſee that it be upright and ſincere. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*, (ſaith the *Lord* to *Abraham*) Gen. 17.1. that is, upright, ſincere,; walking, though not with a *perfect foot*, yet with a *perfect heart*. So did good *Hezekiah*; *Remember now, O Lord*, (ſaith he, lying upon his ſick-bed) *how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*, Iſa.38.3. And ſee that we thus walk, taking up a religious courſe, and going on in it, not

out of any by and ſiniſter reſpect, but out of an unfeigned *love* to *God*, and to his *Law*. *I will love thee, O Lord, my ſtrength*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 18. 1. *I love thy Teſtimonies*, Pſal. 119. 119. *I love thy Commandments above gold, yea above fine gold*, verſ. 127. And out of an unfeigned *hatred* of *ſin*, all ſin. *I hate every falſe way*, verſ. 104. All ſinful actions, words, and thoughts: *I hate vain thoughts, but thy Law do I love*, verſ. 113. Such a frame of ſpirit let every of us labour for, that we may find and feel in our ſouls ſuch a *ſympathy and antipathy*; Sympathy with what is good, Antipathy againſt what is evil; ſo as that we love and like the one, but hate and abhor the other.

Direct. 2. Seek direction from God.

Then (ſecondly) our hearts being by the power of converting and ſanctifying Grace brought to this frame and temper, now ſeek out for Direction. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy ſtatutes*, Pſal. 119. 5. Which look we up unto *God* for, begging it of him, that he would ſhew us the ways wherein he would have us to walk. That is *Davids* Prayer, *Pſal.* 25. 4 *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy pathes.* Theſe of our ſelves we cannot find out; and therefore go we unto him whom we are deſirous to ſerve, begging it of him that he would acquaint us with his mind and will, ſhewing us his ways, teaching us his Statutes, inſtructing us concerning his Teſtimonies, which we find *David* often beging of his God.

By Prayer.

Waiting upon him in the uſe of means.

And whilſt we beg it from him, now wait we upon him in the uſe of ſuch *means* as whereby he is

is wont to do this for his people; which ordinarily he doth by his *Word*. Here it was that *David* ſought and found this Direction. *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths, Pſal.* 119. 105. And ſuch uſe make we of the *Word*, as *read*, ſo *preached*; to this end going to the *Houſe* of *God*, that we may learn his *ways*. So the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſheweth how the Subjects of Chriſts Kingdom ſhould do under the Goſpel, *Iſai.* 2. 3. *Come ye* (ſay they) *let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the Houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths.* In this way, and by this means, ſeek we to finde out the right ways, thoſe ways which God would have us to walk in.

Direct. 3. To conſider their own way.

3. And thus endeavouring to finde out Gods ways, now *conſider our own ways. Now therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Conſider your ways*, Hag. 1. 5. repeated *verſ.* 7. *Set your hearts upon them*, (as the Hebrew hath it,) think of them. *I thought on my ways* (ſaith *David*) *and turned my feet unto thy Teſtimonies*, Pſal. 119. 59. Pondering our paths. *Ponder the paths of thy feet* (ſaith the Wiſeman,) *and let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed*, (or *ordered*, as the Margin readeth it.) Trying and examining our ways. *Let us ſearch and try our ways*, (ſaith the Church) *Lam.* 3. 40. Bring them to the teſte, trying them by the Rule of the Word, whether they be agreeable thereunto, whether they be *Gods ways*, or no.

Direct. 4. Being *Gods* ways, to ſtand faſt and hold on in the

4. And finding them ſo to be, now ſee that we *keep them*, hold on in them. *My foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept, and not declined*,

(ſaith *Job*) cap. 23. v. 11. And ſo *David*, Pſal. 18. 21. *I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.* And the like ſaith *Job* of a righteous perſon, *Job* 17. 9. *The righteous alſo ſhall hold on his way.* And ſee that we do the like, looking and going right on, not turning aſide. *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look ſtraight before thee; turn not to the right hand, nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil:* Prov. 4. 25, 27. Thus let us walk right on, avoiding both extreams, holding on our courſe in the profeſſion and practice of Piety, doing what God requireth, declining and avoiding what he forbiddeth, continuing in well-doing. Thus be we vigilant over our ſelves, taking heed of ſlipping, ſtumbling, falling into any ſin; much more of turning aſide into a courſe of ſin: Which who ſo willingly doth, the Pſalmiſt will tell him what he muſt expect, *Pſal.* 125. 5. *As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their crooked ways, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* Falling away from God, and deſerting his ways, they ſhall have their portion with thoſe that never walked in them. Take we heed of ſuch *Apoſtacy.* That is the Apoſtles Caveat, *Heb.* 3. 12. *Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.* No one thing is more diſpleaſing unto God then this. *If any man draw back my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, (ſaith the Lord) *Heb.* 10. 38. Where there is a *Meioſis* in the phraſe, more being intended then expreſſed; *My ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, I ſhall

for

for ever hate and abhor ſuch a one. As for ſuch, *It had been better for them* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, then after they have known it to turn from the holy Commandement.* 2 Pet. 2. 21. Having once ſet our faces Heaven-ward, and ſet our foot in the right way, and begun to walk in it, ſee that we now hold on, not turning back, come what will come; walking cloſely and conſcionably with God all our days.

Direct. 5. Set the Lord always before them.

To which end, that we may ſo do, that we may be kept from ſuch deviations or back-ſlidings, let us *ſet the Lord always before us.* So *David* tells us he did, *Pſal.* 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord always before me.* And ſo do we, walking before him, as in his ſight and preſence. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect,* Gen. 17. 1. Remembring, (what we have heard) that his eyes are upon all our ways; do what we do as in his ſight, approving our ſelves unto him in what ever we do. *In all thy ways acknowledge him,* Prov. 3. 6. Doing that, and onely that, which we apprehend to be *good in his ſight,* as *Hezekiah* appeals to his God that he had done. *Iſai.* 38. 3. Walking in his fear: So did the *Churches,* of whom it is ſaid, *They were edified, and walked in the fear of the Lord,* Act. 9. 31. So walk we, fearing nothing ſo much as leſt we ſhould offend thoſe *Eyes* which are *purer then to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity,* viz. without abhorrence and deteſtation, *Hab.* 1. 13. So walking we ſhall be bleſſed. *Bleſſed is every one that feareth the Lord, and walketh in his ways,* Pſal. 128. 1.

Direct.6. Set his Word before them.

And thus ſetting God himſelf before us, ſet we alſo his *Word* before us. As the *Sea-man* doth his *Compaſs*; which having in his eye he ſteereth his courſe according to the ſeveral points thereof: So do we, for the right ordering of our ways ſet the Word before us. This was *Davids Compaſs*, who begs it of his God, *Order my ſteps in* (or *according to*) *thy Word.* Pſal. 119. 133. This muſt they do who would walk warily, they muſt *walk by Rule.* So walk we: *Let us walk by the ſame Rule*, Phil. 3. 16. *As many as walk according to this Rule* (the Rule of the New Creature) *peace be upon them*, Gal. 6. 16. And what *Rule* is that, but the *Word*? which is the *Rule of Life*, *Regula fidei & morum*, the Rule of *Faith* and *Manners*, teaching Chriſtians what they are to believe, and how they are to walk; the *Scriptures*, which are like the *Sea-mans Charde*, ſhewing him the ſeveral ways that he is to ſteer.

Direct.7. Propounding holy Patterns.

To which alſo joyn the *Examples* of others, propounding to our ſelves *good Patterns*. *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which ſo walk as ye have us for an enſample*; (ſo *Paul* there goeth on, writing to his *Philippians*) *Phil.* 3. 17. And the like he ſaith to his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 4. 16. *Wherefore, I beſeech you, be ye followers of me.* This do we; ſuch as have been, in their time, exact walkers, let them be *pataterns* to us, follow we their examples: Onely with this limitation, this *Caution*, which the Apoſtle giveth to thoſe his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Chriſt.* So far, and no further. As for *Chriſt*, he is a *peerleſs*

leſs Pattern, who (as St. *Peter* ſaith) *ſuffered for us, leaving us an enſample, that we ſhould follow his ſteps.* 1 Pet. 2. 21. This he did both in his *Active* and *Paſſive* Obedience, in both which he was a *perfect Pattern*: So are not the beſt of men, who being ſubject to infirmities and failings, they are not to be made abſolute Patterns for us to be imitated by us, but onely ſo far as they *follow Chriſt*, walking regularly, according to the Rule of the Word.

Direct. 8. Taking heed of bad Exples.

And whileſt we propound good Examples to our ſelves, take heed of *bad* ones. Theſe are *Satans ſtumbling-blocks*, which he caſteth in our way to make us miſcarry by imitating of them; and therefore take we heed of them: As alſo of *ill Company*. *Make no friendſhip with an angry man, and with a furious man thou ſhalt not go; leſt thou learn his ways, and get a ſnare to thy ſoul*; (that is *Solomons* counſel) *Prov.* 22. 25. And ſuch is *Pauls* advice to his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 5. *I wrote unto you, in an Epiſtle, not to company with fornicatours*, verſ. 9. *But now I have written unto you, not to company, If any man that is called a Brother be a fornicatour, or covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one no not to eat*, verſ. 11. that is, not to have unneceſſary ſociety, much leſs intimate familiarity with them. This men will beware of in infectious times; they will not come near one that hath a *Plague-ſore* about him, if they know it, being afraid of being infected by him, knowing the ſpreading and dangerous nature of that Diſeaſe. Even ſuch is the diſeaſe

diſeaſe of ſin, as infectious to the ſoul as the Plague is to the body. And therefore, as much as may be, keep we our diſtance, taking heed how we come neer unto ſuch, of having any intimacy with them.

Direct. 9. Take heed of Temptations.

To this I might add, Take heed of what ever *Temptations* are preſented and held forth to us. Of theſe (as you have heard) the beſt of Saints meet with many in their way. As the *Wiſe-man* ſaith of the *Harlot*, Prov. 9. 14, 15. *She ſitteth at the door of her houſe, on a ſeat in the high places of the City, to call paſſengers that go right on their ways*; to entice and induce them to turn aſide unto her, and to commit folly with her. Even ſo is it with the beſt of Saints; whileſt they are going right on in their ways they are ſubject to meet with many *Temptations*, ſuch as I have before ſpoken of, ſome *alluring*, other *diſcouraging*: Now would we take heed to our ways, hearken not to them, conſult not with them.

Direc. 10 Be ever jealous of themſelves

To which I might yet add; *Be we ever jealous over our ſelves*; never ſecure, never confident of our own ſtanding. *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. Ever ſuſpecting our own hearts; ever fearing. *Happy is the man that feareth alway*, Prov. 28. 14. feareth God, and feareth himſelf. Never walking in our own ſtrength, truſting to our own feet. But

Direc. 11 Beg aſſiſtance from God.

In the laſt place, Beg we it of *God*, that, whileſt he ſheweth us his way, he would alſo *enable us to walk in it, and hold us up in it.* That is *Davids* Prayer for himſelf, *Pſal.* 17. 5. *Hold up my*

my goings in thy paths, that my foot-ſteps ſlip not. Such is the weakneſs of the beſt and ſtrongeſt of Saints, that being left to themſelves they cannot but ſlip and fall. And therefore make we this our daily requeſt unto God, that he would by the power of his Grace and Spirit thus up-hold us. This is the vvay to *take heed to our ways.* Which *Leſſon* the Lord teach every one of us to learn and practiſe.

And that, as at all times, ſo ſpecially in *troubleſome times.* Troubleſome times are dangerous times, vvherein men, being apt to turn with the times, as Weather-cocks vvith the vvind, are often brought to turn aſide from thoſe vvays vvherein before they vvalked. A truth vvhereof vve have had experience enough, and too much, in the late times. Which let it make us for ever vvary to look to our vvays. But I ſhall not any further enlarge upon it. Thus I have done vvith the *Matter* of *Davids Reſolution*, as it is ſet forth in a *General* vvay; Now advance vve to that *Particular*, vvhich he ſaith his eye vvas chiefly upon, as mine alſo vvas vvhen I firſt took this Text in hand. Specially in times of trouble.

That I ſin not with my Tongue.

We have here an account given of the fore-going *Reſolution*, ſhewing vvhat it vvas that *David* had a ſpecial eye upon in taking it up, vvhat it vvas that made him thus reſolve to be at this time ſo cautious, ſo wary, and vvatchfull over his vvays; this he did (ſaith he) *That I ſin not*, that I *ſin not with my Tongue.* So I may again divide the words, The Reaſon of *Davids* Reſolution.

{Gene-ral. Speci-al.} words, taking notice in the former of a *General*, in the latter of a *Special Reason* for what he did. I ſhall inſiſt upon them ſeverally, beginning with the former.

The General Reaſon; That he might not ſin.

That I ſin not.] This was the thing which *David*, in this condition wherein he was, above all other things moſt feared. However, at this time, (it being a time of great trouble and danger to him,) he could not but have many fears upon him. So he had when he fled before *Saul*, and was fain to betake himſelf to the *Philiſtines*, where being brought before King *Achiſh*, he changed his behaviour, counterfeiting himſelf to be diſtracted, acting the part of a mad-man, (of which we have the Story) 1 *Sam.* 21.12, *&c.* Then were his head and heart full of cares and fears. So much we may take notice of from himſelf, *Pſ.* 34.4. where ſpeaking of his condition at that time, he bleſſeth God for delivering him from them, as he had done. *I ſought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears*, v.4. And it could not be otherwiſe with him at this time, when he fled before *Abſalom*; being by that unnatural Rebellion of his Son (who had a great party ſiding with him of ſuch as were *Davids* malicious and inveterate enemies,) expoſed to many eminent dangers, both of loſing his Kingdom and Life, this could not but ſtir up in him many ſad thoughts of heart; theſe perplexities could not but be accompanied with many fears: Yet lo what was the thing which he feared above all, *viz.* leſt he ſhould *ſin* againſt his God. And thus fearing of it, he was moſt carefull to guard and keep himſelf from it.

And

And ſo all Gods people either are, or ought to be; to be thus affected towards the *evil of ſin*, of all evils to be moſt fearful of that, and moſt careful to keep themſelves from it. This is that which *Moſes* ſaith to the people of *Iſrael* at Mount *Sinai*, Exod. 20. vvhen ſeeing and hearing what they did, the *thunder and lightening*, and the *noiſe of the Trumpet*, and the *Mountain ſmoaking*, they vvere thereupon ſtruck vvith fear, ſo as they vvithdrew, and ſtood afar off, (as the 18th. verſe hath it) *Moſes* now calleth upon them not to fear any thing but *ſin*. So it followeth *ver.* 20. *And Moſes ſaid unto the people, fear not, for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye ſin not.* Mark it: how vvhereas in the beginning of the Verſe they vvere forbidden to fear, in the cloſe of it they are required to fear. So it is, there is a two-fold fear, the one a *ſervile*, the other a *filial* fear; the one *Judgment*, and the other *Sin*. Now it is the former of theſe vvhich is here forbidden, the latter required. *Fear not, but fear.* Fear not the danger vvhich you apprehend, but fear that vvhich is moſt to be feared, leſt ye ſhould ſin againſt God. This is that vvhich Gods people are called upon to make the chief of their fears. *Stand in awe, and ſin not*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 4. 4. *Rigzu, Pavete, contremiſcite*; *fear*, and *tremble*; or (as the 70. render it) Ὀργίζεσθε, *Be angry*; vvhich is followed by the Apoſtle, Eph. 4. 26. *Be angry and ſin not.* Whateyer occaſions are offered for the ſtirring up of any Paſſions in the Soul, of fear, or anger, &c. Yet let Gods people

Obſerv. Chriſtians to be moſt fearfull of the evil of ſin.

people be moſt afraid of this, taking heed, that what ever comes, they ſin not. This was the thing which *David* was in continual fear of; whereupon it was that he hid the Law of God in his heart, as he ſaith he did, *Pſal.*119. 11. *Thy word have I hid within my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* Even as men, in infectious times, fearing the Plague, make uſe of ſuch *Alexicaca*, or *Alexipharmaca*, ſuch Preſervations as are by Phyſicians preſcribed and commended to them, which may be of ſovereign uſe for the ſecuring of them againſt what they fear: ſuch uſe did *David* make of the *Law* of his God, hiding his *Word* in his boſom, in his heart, that he might thereby be preſerved from that which he was moſt afraid of, the infection of ſin, that he might not ſin againſt his God. Like fear and care there is to be found in a gracious ſoul. So there was in *Joſeph*, who when his *Miſtreſs* tempted him to commit folly with her, he preſently returns her this Anſwer, *How can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God?* Gen. 39.9. And being afterwards in an impudent way preſſed and importuned, yea aſſaulted by her, ſhe taking hold of his Coat, he rather leaves that behind him, then to yield to her, or abide with her. *He left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out*, verſ. 12. This did he upon the account of Religious fear, fearing ſin more then her diſpleaſure, though that afterwards proved of dangerous conſequence to him, when ſhe falſly accuſing him to her Husband, he was thereupon caſt into Priſon. And of ſuch a mind we find other of the

the Saints of God to have been. So was *Daniel*, who feared his Omiſſion of his duty, in leaving off to pray to his God, more then the *Lyons den*, Dan.6.10. And ſo thoſe three *Worthies*, who feared more to worſhip *Nebuchadnezzars golden Image*, then they did the *fiery Furnace*, though never ſo hot, *Dan.* 3.16. And the like was *Moſes*, of whom it is ſaid, that *He choſe rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*, Heb.11.25. Any thing rather then ſin. Upon this account it hath been that the *Martyrs* of Chriſt in all ages have ſuffered ſuch loſſes, ſuch torments as they have done, even *reſiſting unto blood* in *ſtriving againſt ſin*; as the Apoſtle intimates it, *Heb.*12.4. where writing to his *Hebrews* of their ſufferings, he tells them, *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin.* This had many others done, as thoſe whom he had ſpoken of in the Chapter foregoing, ſome of which (as he ſaith) were *ſtoned, ſawn aſunder, tempted, ſlain with the ſword*,&c. *ver.* 37. Enduring all manner of torments that cruelty could invent, rather then ſin againſt their God, to which they were by thoſe means *tempted.* Thus in this conflict againſt ſin they *reſiſted unto blood*: Thus did they fear *ſinning* more then *ſuffering.* And the like have many other before and after them done, making this their chief fear. So *Chryſoſtome* told the *Empreſs Eudoxia* that he did, who when ſhe ſent unto him a threatning meſſage, he preſently returns unto her this Anſwer, *Nill niſi peccatum metuo, I fear nothing but ſin.*

And

And great *Reaſon* there is vvhy it ſhould be ſo, vvhy men ſhould thus fear ſin above all, and be moſt careful to avoid it, in as much as

Reaſ. 1. Sin the greateſt evil.

1. It is the *greateſt evil*. Thence it is that vve find it commonly called by the name of *Evil*. *He that will have life and ſee good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil*, 1 Pet. 3. 10. *Let him eſchew evil*, ver. 11. ἀπὸ κακοῦ, meaning the evil of *ſin*; which is *the Evil*, as it is often called. *Abhorr that which is evil*, Rom. 12. 9. τὸ πονηρὸν, *the Evil*. Two ſorts of *Evils* vve find ſpoken of in Scripture, *Malum Culpæ*, *& Pœnæ*, the evil of *Sin*, and of *Puniſhment*; both known by the name of *Evil*. So ſufferings and troubles are often called, κακὰ, and πονηρὰ. *Alexander the Copper-ſmith did me much evil*, (ſaith *Paul*) 2 *Tim.* 4. 14. πολλὰ κακὰ, he procured him many troubles. And the time of affliction and ſuffering is called an *evil day*. *Redeeming the time becauſe the days are evil*, Eph. 5. 16. Ἡμέραι πονηραὶ; hard and dangerous times, both in regard of the *Corruption* that vvas in them, as alſo *Perſecution*. *Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day*, Cap. 6. 13. But of all *Evils* none like the evil of *Sin*. This is the τὸ κακὸν, τὸ πονηρὸν, *The Evil*; that vvhich weigheth down all evils of ſuffering. Of penal Evils, *Death* is looked upon as the greateſt, but ſin is a greater evil then that. Thence is it by the Apoſtle very fitly compared to the *ſting* of the *Serpent*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. *The ſting of death is ſin*. The *Serpent* by her hiſſing may affright and ſcare, but it is the ſting that hurts;

vvere

were it not for that ſhe were not to be feared. So ſtands the caſe betwixt *ſin* and *death*; were it not for *ſin*, death might affright, but it could not hurt. It is *ſin*, which as it brought *death* into the world, and continues it in it; ſo it maketh it ſo terrible and hurtful as it is. This is the *greateſt Evil.*

A three-fold evil attending upon ſin.

So it will appear to be, if we do but conſider the *Evils* which attend upon it; which are of three ſorts, *Temporal*, *Spiritual*, and *Eternal*. *Temporal* plagues and puniſhments which men bring upon themſelves by ſin; of which Gods Saints ſometimes have ſad experience. So had *David*, who for numbring of the people had that three-ſtringed whip held forth unto him, a three-fold judgment tendred to him to take his choice of, *Famine*, *Sword*, *Peſtilence*, the laſt of which being ſubmitted to, in three days ſpace ſwept away ſeventy thouſand of his people, 2 *Sam.*24. And as for *Spiritual* Evils, there is not the leaſt ſin which a man willingly commits, but being charged upon the Conſcience may diſturb and diſquiet it, nay be as a fire in it, filling it with horrors and terrors, being as a Hell in the Soul. And as for *Eternal* Judgment, that is the wages of ſin. *The wages of ſin is death*, Rom.6.23. *Sin when it is finiſhed it bringeth forth death*, Jam.1.15. Eternal death, which is due unto the leaſt ſin. That firſt ſin of our firſt Parents, in taſting of the forbidden fruit, it might ſeem but a ſmall ſin, yet we know what it brought upon them and theirs; even the guilt, not onely of a *Temporal*, but an *Eternal death*, under which all that were then in

their loynes, until by grace they be freed from it, do lie. The remembrance whereof should make all the Sons of *Adam* for ever fearful of sinning, and that above all other things.

Reas. 2. The continual danger of sinning.

And as most fearful of it, so most *watchful* against it; most careful to avoid sin: And that in as much as they are continually in danger of it; where men apprehend themselves in danger of any evil, they will be the more careful and heedful to secure and preserve themselves from it. Now such is the condition of all men, they are continually in danger of sinning, being (as it were) beset and besieged with it. So the Apostle describeth the nature of *Original Corruption*, Heb. 12. 1. where he calls it Ἀποτείχισμον, or Ἐυπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν, the *encompassing sin*, or the *sin that doth so easily beset us*; being like a net, which surrounding and encompassing the fish, it is easily taken in it. Such is the spreading and entangling nature of sin, of Original sin, wherewith the soul is encompassed, all the powers and faculties of it being beset with it, by reason whereof every man is subject to fall into actual sins daily, and hourly, if he do not keep a strict watch over himself. Thus is this *evil* ever at hand. *When I would do good*, (saith the *Apostle*) *evil is present with me*, Rom. 7. 21. Sinful Corruption lurking in the heart is continually working, taking all occasions, as to hinder men from doing that which is good, so to put them upon that which is evil. Upon which account they had need (as you have before heard) to keep a continual watch over themselves, to take heed to their ways that they *sin not*.

By reason of Original Corruption within.

And

And as inbred Corruption, the *Fleſh*, within, is apt to break forth, ſo *Satan* and the *World* from without are continually aſſaulting, or enſnaring; *Satan*, a vigilant and unwearied adverſary, who is ever at hand, obſerving and watching us, ready to take all advantages againſt us, and to make uſe of them to draw us into ſin. This was his deſign againſt our *firſt Parents*, and ſo it is againſt their *Poſterity*. Having no other way to deſtroy them, he maketh it his work to ſtrike fire into that tinder, to ſet corruption a work, and to draw it forth into actual ſins. And as for the *World*, that preſents to the ſenſes variety of objects, which ſerve for *Temptations*, either to diſcourage men from doing that which is good, or to allure them to that which is evil. All which, being put together, make the danger, as *in* ſinning, ſo *of* ſuffering, very great; which calleth for, and requireth all poſſible carefulneſs for the preventing and avoiding of it. Satan and the World without.

And this, as Gods people are to make uſe of at all times, ſo ſpecially in times of *Affliction*. Time of Affliction, (as you have heard before) is an *hour of Temptation*, wherein, as God trieth his people, ſo *Satan* trieth them, making great uſe of, and taking advantage from their ſufferings, to drive them into what before he could not draw them, to ſin againſt God. Upon this account it was that he was ſo earneſt with *God*, that he would afflict and viſit his ſervant *Job* with a ſucceſſion of troubles: Firſt in his *Eſtate* with loſſes and croſſes, taking away his ſubſtance from him. *Put forth thine hand now* (ſaith he) *and touch all*

that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face, Job. 1. 11. And then in his *Body* with sickness and sores; *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bones and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face,* Cap. 2. ver. 5. And this still is his design in bringing calamities and troubles upon the people of God; that which he aimeth at is, that he may bring one evil out of another, a greater out of a lesser, the evil of sin out of the evil of punishment, or chastisement: which should make them the more wary and watchful over themselves at such times.

Thus then you see that it is so, and why it ought to be so; that Gods people are, or ought to be most fearful of sin, and most watchful against it, in regard of the greatness of the evil of it, and their own obnoxiousness to it, by reason of the *Flesh*, their own Corruption within, the *Devil* and the *World* without. Which let it be applied, as the former was, by way of *Reprehension, Exhortation.*

Use 1. Reprehension.

1. By way of *Reprehension.* Is this the thing which is most to be feared? How is it then, that it is by many no more feared then it is?

1. Of such as fear not sin at all.

1. Some *not fearing it at all*: So it is with many, with the greatest part, persons wicked and ungodly. They make nothing of sin, sleight it, make a mock of it. So the *Wiseman* sets forth their temper and disposition, *Prov.* 14. 9. *Fools make a mock at sin.* Wicked and ungodly men, (who are frequently called by this name [*fools,*] as by *David* in his *Psalmes,* so by *Solomon* his son throughout his *Proverbs*; and that deservedly,

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in as much as they, deſpiſing the Wiſdom of God in his Word, follow their own luſts, and the vain ſinfull cuſtomes of the world, which is the greateſt folly that can be,) they are ſo far from being afraid of ſin, that they make a mock, a ſport of it. *It is a ſport to a fool to do miſchief*, Prov. 10. 23. Let them be but free from *ſuffering*, as for *ſinning*, let them fear it that will, they do not: No, though they be warned of the danger of it, hear the judgments of God denounced againſt it, yea, and ſee thoſe judgments executed upon others before their eyes, yet they regard it not. So long as they finde any pleaſure and delight in it, or may make any outward advantage of it, they care not what ſin they commit. So the Lord chargeth it upon the *Prieſts* of old, *Hoſ.* 4. 8. *They eat up the ſin of my people, and ſet their heart on their iniquity.* So long as they made advantage of the ſins of the people, by having ſo many more ſacrifices offered up for them, on which they fed, and wherewith they fatted themſelves, they, in ſtead of mourning (as they ought to have done) were glad of it. Even ſo is it with many; ſo long as they can grow fat by their own ſins, or the ſins of others, they are never troubled at them, but rather well pleaſed with them, and rejoyce in them.

2. Such as fear it not as they ought to do.

2. Others there are who, it may be, are afraid of ſin, but not as they ought to do; being

1. Some afraid onely of ſome ſins.

1. Afraid onely of *ſome ſins*, not ſo of other. Greater ſins, ſuch ſins as ſtare them in the face, being of a hainous and horrid nature, crying ſins, theſe, it may be, they are afraid of; but not ſo of

leſſer ſins. So is it with *Papiſts*, many, and moſt of them; who, as for *Mortal* ſins, thoſe *ſeven deadly ſins* (as they call them,) theſe (it may be) they are afraid of; but as for thoſe which they call *Venial*, them they look upon as *Peccadilloes*, ſmall, petty, trifling things, and ſo are not, in the leaſt, troubled at the acting and committing of them. And, truly, ſo is it with too many amongſt our ſelves: Great and horrid ſins, as *Murder*, *Adultery*, *Swearing*, *Drunkenneſs*, theſe they dare not touch, (I would I could ſay ſo of all;) but as for leſſer ſins, whether of Commiſſion or omiſſion, theſe they are not touch'd, not affected with. And ſo for *Open* ſins, theſe they decline, fearing to commit them in the ſight of others; but not ſo in ſecret. A plain evidence that they do not fear *ſin as ſin*: It is not the *ſinfulneſs* which they are afraid of, which if they did, they would be afraid of all ſin; *A quatenus ad omne*, He that feareth a thing becauſe it is of ſuch a kinde, will fear all of that kinde; but onely the *puniſhment* of it. Not the evil that is *in* the ſin, but the evil which attends upon it. Were it not for this, they would let looſe the reins to more ſins then they do; nay, not be afraid of any.

2. Some not making ſin their chief fear.

Others there are who fear ſin, but they do not fear it enough, they do not make this the chief of their fears; they do not fear the evil of ſin more then the evil of ſuffering: And thence is it, that when theſe two ſtand in competition the one with the other, ſo as they muſt chooſe the one of them, either ſinning or ſuffering, now they will incline to the former. Such is the caſe of *Apoſtates*, who

who, in times of Perſecution, have been brought to renounce that Religion which before they made profeſſion of. And ſo fareth it too often even with Gods own Children, who through fear are induced and brought to act againſt their Conſciences, doing that which they were convinced of to be ſinful and unlawful; which afterwards, when they come to themſelves again, and conſider what they have done, ſits ſad and heavy upon their ſpirits, as *Peters* denial of his *Maſter* did upon his.

3. Others there are who though they fear ſin, and that as ſin, and ſo fear all ſin, yet they are not ſo fearfull and carefull of it as they ought to be; not fearfull at *all times*, in *all places*, not watching over themſelves to avoid all occaſions of ſin; by which means they come to be enſnared by it, and through infirmity to fall into it. The caſe even of the beſt Saints. Who is there but cometh under this charge, and ſo may juſtly take home this Reprehenſion to himſelf? Where is the ſoul that feareth always, and that is ſo vigilant, ſo watchfull and carefull over it ſelf as it ought to be? And that can ſay, with that good Father, that it *fears nothing but ſin*? Oh that there were ſuch a diſpoſition, ſuch a temper of ſpirit, to be found in every of us! 3. Some not fearing it at all times, in all places.

Let that be the word of *Exhortation*. We have heard how *David* ſtood affected, how he made this the chief of his fears, leſt he ſhould *ſin againſt God*: fearing this more then all other evils, taking more care for the ſecuring of his Soul againſt this, then his Body or Eſtate againſt thoſe eminent dangers wherewith he was then encompaſſed. And herein let him be a pattern for our imitation. *Uſe* 2. Exhortation. Chriſtians exhorted to fear ſin above all other evils.

What-ever ſtate or condition God ſhall pleaſe to bring us into, be our ſtreights never ſo great, our troubles and dangers never ſo many, yet let our eye be chiefly upon this, that *we ſin not.* This is the great *Caveat* which St. *John* gave to thoſe to whom he writes, it being the thing which induced him (as he ſaith) to write that his firſt *Epiſtle* unto them, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. *My little children,* (ſaith he) *theſe things write I unto you, that ye ſin not.* The times then were ſad and dangerous times; ſad in reſpect of Perſecution, under which *John* himſelf was ſoon after a ſufferer; and dangerous in regard of the many back-ſliders and ſeducers, which then every where abounded, ſo as by reaſon thereof true Believers were then expoſed to many Temptations: And hereupon it was that he wrote and ſent that *Epiſtle* unto them, to put them in mind of that which they ought to be moſt fearful and carefull of, that what-ever came, they might *not ſin.* And the like *Caveat* the Apoſtle S. *Paul,* writing to his *Corinthians,* gives unto them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 34. *Awake to righteouſneſs, and ſin not*; willing and warning them to be vigilant and watchfull over themſelves, taking heed leſt they ſhould be infected with the evils of the times, whether Errours in Doctrine, or Corruption in Manners, keeping themſelves pure. That is the thing which he mindeth *Timothy* of, 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. *Keep thy ſelf pure.* This he would have him do as a *Chriſtian* in general, and as a *Miniſter* in ſpecial, taking heed of defiling his hands in *Ordination* of Miniſters, by laying them upon the heads of ſuch as were unmeet for, and unworthy of ſo ſacred a function.

function. And this let all and every of us have a ſpecial regard unto, both in our general and particular Callings, that we keep our ſelves pure; taking heed, above all things, of the Infection of Sin. This is the *Character* which St. *John* giveth of a perſon truly regenerate, 1 *Joh.* 5. 18. *We know* (ſaith he) *that whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not*, (that is, willingly, ſo as to live in a courſe of ſin,) *but he that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf*; that is, endeavoureth ſo to do, to preſerve himſelf from ſin. And St. *James* tells us, that herein conſiſteth Gods true Religion, *Jam.* 1. 27. *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this, To viſit the fatherleſs and widow in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted of the world*; for a man, as to exerciſe charity towards others, ſo to be wary and watchfull over himſelf, that he be not tainted by the evil examples of the men of the world, ſo as to conform to them in their ſinful ways and courſes, or to be defiled with the pollutions and luſts which are in the world. And herein do we approve and ſhew our ſelves to be truly Religious, by being thus watchfull over our ſelves. What ever we ſuffer in and from the world, yet keep we our ſelves unſpotted of it, taking heed of the evil of *ſin* above all evils. That is our *Saviours* Counſel and charge to his *Diſciples*, which he often repeats and inculcates, upon all occaſions, *Take ye heed, and beware of the leaven of the Phariſees*, Matth. 16. 6. *Take heed that no man deceive you*, cap. 24. v. 6. *Take ye heed, watch and pray*, Mark 13. 33. Making uſe of all ſpiritu-

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al Fortifications for the ſecuring of your ſouls. *Take heed leſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life*, Luk. 21. 34. Thus, how-ever he willed them alſo to take heed of *temporal dangers*, which he doth, *Mark* 13. 9. *Take heed to your ſelves, for they ſhall deliver you up unto Councels*, &c. Yet his chief Caveat ſtill was that they ſhould take heed of *ſpiritual evils*, of ſin. And this counſel let every of us hearken to, flying from ſin. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Every one that profeſſeth himſelf a Chriſtian, to be one of Chriſt's Diſciples, having his Name called upon him, and expecteth benefit from him, let him depart from iniquity, Ἀποστήτω, let him ſtand and keep far off from it, ſhunning and avoiding all manner of ſin.

Motives. To excite whereunto, reflect we upon the *Reaſons* before given in, the great evil of ſin, and our own obnoxiouſneſs to it. To which may be added,

Conſid. 1. Againſt whom ſin is committed; againſt God, who is

1. A Great God.

1. Conſider *againſt whom* it is that the ſin is *committed*, and *who* it is that is *offended* by it; viz. *God. How can I do this, and ſin againſt God?* And ſhall we dare to offend him? ſo *Great* a God, ſo *Holy* a God, ſo *Juſt* a God, ſo *Gracious* a God!

1. So *Great*. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſie?* (παραζηλοῦμεν, provoke him to anger and indignation,) *are we ſtronger then he?* 1 Cor. 10. 22. Better provoke all the men in the world then provoke God: As for their power, it is limited, but ſo is not his. We are *in his hands as clay in the hands of the Potter*; *In him we live, and move, and have*

have our being. And ſhall we dare to offend him? which, if we willingly do, who ſhall intercede for us, for the pacifying of his anger, the turning away of his wrath? *If one man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him; but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* (ſaith *Eli* to his Sons) 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. Offences betwixt men and men may be reconciled by Friends, or taken up by the Judge, cauſing the Delinquent to make ſatisfaction unto the party offended: but if any man ſhall dare to ſin againſt God wittingly and willingly, againſt knowledge and conſcience, who ſhall now interpoſe, or what ſatisfaction ſhall he be able to give unto him? Oh take we heed of ſinning againſt ſo great a God. 2.

2. So *Holy* a God. A *God of ſuch pure eyes* (as before we heard from the Prophet *Habakkuk*) *that he cannot behold evil, nor look on impiety*; that is, (as before I expounded it) without deteſtation and abhorrence; So as there is never a ſin but offendeth and provoketh thoſe pure eyes. *Their tongues and their doings are againſt the Lord to provoke the eyes of his glory,* (ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſpeaking of the *Jews*) Iſai. 3. 8. A Holy God.

3. So *Juſt* a God; who will not paſs by ſuch ſins as are willingly committed againſt him, without puniſhing of them. *Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions*: (ſo the Lord tells the people of *Iſrael*, ſpeaking concerning the *Angel* which he had ſent before them, in whom he ſaith *his Name* was, meaning *the Angel of the Covenant*, his own *Son*,) Exod. 23. 21. Such is the juſtice and 3. A Juſt God.

and ſeverity of God againſt wilfull offenders, that they cannot expect to find mercy at his hands.

4. A Gracious God.

4. So *Gracious* a God, a God that daily loadeth us with his Benefits, to whom we are beholden for all the mercies we have, or hope for. And ſhall we thus requite him for all his loving kindneſs, to ſin againſt him? *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people, and unwiſe? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath not he made thee, and eſtabliſhed thee?* (So *Moſes* reaſons the caſe with the Children of *Iſrael*) Deut. 32. 6. Men who have received great and undeſerved favours from one that is no ways obliged to them, if they have any ingenuity in them, will be afraid to offend him; how much more ſhould we be to offend this our gracious God?

Conſid. 2. The hurt a man hereby doth to himſelf.

Conſider what hurt a man hereby doth unto himſelf; how hereby he conſulteth evil to his own ſoul. So the Prophet *Habakkuk* tells the *covetous* perſon, that ſeeketh to raiſe his own Eſtate by the ruine of others, *Hab.* 2. 9, 10. *Wo unto him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil,* (be ſecured againſt all dangers,) *thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy houſe, and haſt ſinned againſt thy ſoul.* Thus doth God return ſin upon the head of the ſinner, who whileſt (it may be) he ſeeketh to advantage himſelf by his ſin, bringeth great damage upon himſelf thereby. As in his good *Name*, which is thereby blemiſhed, *Sin is a reproach to any people*, (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) Prov. 14. 34. Such are *National* ſins to a people, and *Perſonal* ſins to thoſe

thoſe that commit them, a greater ſhame and reproach then whatever ſufferings they may be ſubject to. So it may be in his *Eſtate*, which God often blaſteth for the ſins of the owner. *A fruitful land into barrenneſs for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* Pſal. 107. 34. However herein they ſin againſt their own *ſouls*, bringing upon them ſpiritual evils here, and without repentance, eternal condemnation hereafter. Upon which account alſo, as we wiſh well to our own ſouls, take heed of giving way to, or allowing our ſelves in any known ſin, which ſooner or later will *ſurely find the ſinner out* (as *Moſes* tells the *Reubenites*, Numb. 32. 23.

Chriſtians not to allow themſelves in the leaſt ſin.

I, be it the leaſt ſin. Small ſins are like ſmall wedges, which make way for greater. And there is not the leaſt ſin but, being allowed, maketh a man a tranſgreſſor of the Law, yea, of the *whole Law*, *He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all*, (ſaith St. *James*) Jam. 2. 10. By allowing himſelf in any one ſin, he thereby bringeth himſelf under the condemnation of the Law, yea, and thereby manifeſteth that he doth not make any true Conſcience of keeping the Law, which if he did, he would not allow himſelf in the leaſt breach of it.

Take take heed of ſins of Infirmity.

And whilſt we thus take heed of allowing our ſelves in any known ſin; take we heed alſo of *falling* into ſin though weakneſs and infirmity. This (as you have heard) the beſt of Saints are continually ſubject to. *The righteous man falleth ſeven times* (ſaith the Wiſe-man) *Prov.* 24. 16. which is true; as of *afflictions* (which I conceive

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to be there principally aimed at) so of *sins*, into which he often falleth. *In many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 2. and there is never a one of these falls but is of dangerous consequence. A slip of the foot may cause a wrench in the leg, which may create a great deal of pain and trouble to the Body. And so may the least sin to the Soul; there being not the least sin, being against light, but it is a *prick at the heart*, giving a wound to the soul, which when it is awakened it will feel. And such a wound who can bear? *The spirit of a man will sustein his infirmities*, (being a cheerful spirit it will bear up under bodily ailements) *but a wounded spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. No wounds given to the *body* are like those which are given to the *soul* by sin. And therefore be we ware of sin, all sin.

Christians to beware of sinning in the day of adversity.

Which whilst we are at other times, so in the *day of Adversity*, in times of trouble; now set a strict watch over our selves that we sin not, taking notice

This were to cross Gods end.

1. That in so doing we shall *cross Gods end*, and thwart his design, which is, that we may not sin. Therefore is it that God afflicteth and correcteth his people. This he doth, as for their *probation* and trial, so for their *proficiency* in grace, that they may be bettered thereby. Herein doth *the Father of spirits*, our heavenly Father, in his dealing with his children, differ from the *Fathers of the flesh*, earthly Parents, as the Apostle tells us, *Heb.* 12. 10. *They verily for a few days chasten us after their own pleasure*, (in the days of childhood they correct their children, which doing

ing oft times unadviſedly, out of paſſion, they thereby do them more hurt then good) *but he for our profit* (Ἐπὶ τὸ συμφέρον, for our ſpiritual benefit) *that we may be made partakers of his holineſs*; be made more holy, leſs ſinful. So then, at ſuch times to ſin againſt him is to croſs his deſign.

2. And again, this is the way not to diminiſh or leſſen, but to *aggravate and heighthen our ſufferings*, full to pull more and greater judgments upon our ſelves. It was *ſin* that brought the preſent affliction upon us. *Wherefore doth a living man complain? a man for the puniſhment of his ſin*, Lam. 3. 39. This is the *mother* of all thoſe evils which here we feel. So then, in this condition to ſin againſt God, what is it, but to propagate more of that breed? By this means God cannot but be highly provoked, to ſee his end ſo croſſed; and ſo hereby not onely the incumbent evils may be continued to us, which otherwiſe might have been removed, but more and greater thereby procured. Which let it make us at ſuch times, of all other things, moſt wary and watchful againſt ſin.

2. The way to aggravate their ſufferings.

But how ſhall we ſet and keep ſuch a watch over our ſelves that we may not be thus overtaken? What ſhall we do, that we may be kept at ſuch, and at all other times, from ſinning againſt God? A Queſtion of great importance.

Queſt. How Chriſtians may be kept from ſinning.

In anſwer whereunto many uſeful *Directions* might be given in. Some of which have been held forth already in the *Application* of the former

Anſw. Some Directions given in.

mer *Doctrine*, in directing us what to do for the right ordering of our *ways* in general; To thoſe now I ſhall make an addition of ſome more, which may relate to *ſin* in particular.

Direct. 1. Get an inward loathing of ſin.

That vve may keep our ſelves from ſin, labour firſt to get an *inward loathing* of it, that there may be an *Antipathy* in our ſouls againſt it, that vve may have an abhorrence of it. So had *David*, vvho ſaith, *I hate every falſe way*, Pſal. 119. 104. And the ſame *Paul* calls for from us in that Text forecited, *Abhor that which is evil*, Rom. 12.9. the evil of ſin. This let us hate, and that as *David* ſaith he did thoſe that hated God, *Pſal.* 139.22. *with a perfect hatred*; hating ſin *as ſin*. Which vvhilſt vve do, vve vvill take heed of it, and that of *all ſin*. A man that hath an *Antipathy* againſt any thing becauſe it is ſuch, as againſt a *Serpent*, or *Toad*, &c. will hate all of that kind, and ſo will not come near any of them. And ſo vvill it be vvith *ſin*. The Soul hating ſin, as ſin, it vvill hate all ſin, and ſo upon that account keep it ſelf from it. Now every of us labour to vvork ſuch an *Antipathy* in our own ſouls, that vve may find them thus diſaffected towards ſin.

To which end conſider

1. The ugly and filthy nature of it.

1. To vvhich end, conſider the *ugly and filthy nature* of it, that it is the *Spawn of the Devil*, his vvork, in the doing vvhereof men come to reſemble him. So do vvilful ſinners, vvho thereby ſhew themſelves vvhoſe off-ſpring they be. *Ye are of your father the Devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do* (ſaith our Saviour to thoſe obſtinate *Jews*) Joh. 8.44. Though they vvere *Gods children*

children by *profeſſion*, and the *children of Abraham* by *birth*, and ſo under an outward viſible Covenant, yet by their practice they ſhewed themſelves to be the *Devils children*, imitating and obeying him. And to the ſame purpoſe, St. *John*, 1 Joh. 3. 8. *He that committeth ſin*, (ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, he that ſinneth vvillingly, and maketh a trade of ſin, living and continuing in it) *is of the Devil*; (a child of his, reſembling him in his malignity, and partaking of his nature,) *for the Devil ſinneth from the beginning*, (being the firſt ſinner, ſinning ſoon after his Creation, he ſtill continueth ſo to do, making this his vvork; and that as to ſin himſelf, ſo to draw others into ſin.) Thus is ſin his vvork. *For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil*, (ſo it there followeth.) Now vvho is there but vvill at leaſt ſay that he hateth and abhorreth the *Devil*? And if vve hate him, then hate his vvorks alſo; abhorring and deteſting ſin, all ſin, which is in it ſelf of a loathſome and filthy nature, *defiling* the Soul. *That which cometh out of the man defileth the man*, Mar. 7. 20. Sinful actions, and vvords, and thoughts, *Theſe are the things that defile a man*, Matth. 15. 20.

2. And as they are of a defiling, ſo of a *poyſonous* nature, poyſoning the Soul. Such was that *firſt ſin* to our *firſt Parents*, poyſoning the nature of man in them, them, and all their poſterity. And of ſuch a nature is all ſin, even the leaſt ſin, which is like a *grain of deadly poyſon*, which being taken down poyſoneth the Body. So doth 2. The poyſonous nature of it.

ſin the Soul. Now a man knowing a thing to be poyſon, he ſhall need no other argument to make him afraid to meddle with it. Thus labour we to bring our hearts to an utter abhorrence of ſin, from the conſideration of the nature of it.

Direct.2. Spiritual Antidotes to be laid in.

And our hearts being thus diſaffected towards ſin, now lay in ſome ſpiritual *Antidotes* and *Preſervatives* againſt it. This was *Davids* practice, (as we have heard) who made ſuch uſe of the *Word*, hiding it in his heart (as he ſaith) that it might be ſuch a preſervative unto him. *Thy word have I hid within my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee*, Pſal. 119. 11. The *Word* is a *Confection*, wherein are to be found many excellent *Ingredients* of ſovereign vertue for the preſerving of the Soul from the infection of ſin. Such are the *Commands*, *Threatnings*, *Promiſes*, *Exhortations*, *Dehortations*, *Counſels*, therein mentioned; with the ſeveral *Arguments* and *Reaſons* given in againſt ſin, in general, and againſt ſuch and ſuch ſins, in particular, with many *Preſidents* and *Examples* there held forth, ſetting forth the dangerous conſequence of ſin. All which being put together will make up a ſovereign *Compoſition*; which being taken down into the Soul, and there throughly digeſted, layed up in the heart, ſeriouſly pondered, duely conſidered, and frequently remembred; it cannot but be of ſingular uſe in this way, to preſerve the ſoul from falling into ſin. So *David* looked upon it, who having had experience of it in himſelf ſets forth the vertue of this *Receipt* in others, *Pſal.37.31. The*

The Word a ſovereign Confection.

Law

Law of God is in his heart, (ſaith he, ſpeaking of a godly man) *none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide*: viz. ſo long as he maketh a right uſe thereof. No ſuch *Preſervative* as this; which therefore make we continual uſe of.

From which alſo may be extracted divers uſeful *Conſiderations*, which being layed upon the breaſt, applied to the ſoul, will be of great and excellent uſe to this purpoſe. Such are thoſe Five which a Religious perſon is ſaid to have written and ſet up before his eyes in his Study, *Noli peccare, Nam Deus videt, Angeli aſtant, Diabolus accuſabit, Conſcientia teſtabitur, Infernus cruciabit. Do not dare to ſin, for God ſeeth thee, The Angels ſtand about thee, the Devil will accuſe thee, thy Conſcience will give evidence againſt thee, and Hell will torment thee.* All which let them be written and engraven upon every of our hearts. The Conſideration whereof will be of great uſe to this end, to make us afraid to ſin, yea, to commit the leaſt ſin.

A five-fold Conſideration to be engraven upon the heart.

To which divers other might be added, as, *viz.* that *account* which every of us muſt give another day. *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf unto God*, Rom 14. 12. So muſt all do, and that of all their *Actions*, *Words*, and *Thoughts*, at that great day of accounts, the general Judgment, which how nigh it is we know not. *We ſhall give an account unto him who is ready to judg the quick and the dead*, 1 Pet. 4. 5.

Direct. 3. Sin to be obſerved in the Riſe

3. Being thus layed in with ſome Preſervatives againſt ſin, now be we careful to *obſerve ſin in the riſe*,

riſe, in the firſt motions of it, that we may there oppoſe and cruſh it. The firſt riſe of ſin in the *heart*, to which it is preſented by ſome temptations, which the will giving ſome entertainment to, by this means it cometh to be conceived, and afterwards brought forth into the act. So St. *James* tells us, *Jam.* 1. 14, 15. *Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed. Then when luſt hath conceived it bringeth forth ſin* Such is the way and manner of ſins production, as it is in natural propagation, where the teeming woman firſt conceiveth, and then bringeth forth. Thus is ſin firſt conceived in the heart, being impregnated by ſome temptation, and then brought forth in the life. Now taking notice of this progreſſion, let it be our care and endeavour to cruſh the Cockatrice in the egge. Finding the firſt motions of ſin in the ſoul, and feeling it begin to ſtir, now oppoſe it, cruſh it, not hearkening to the temptations preſented, but repel them, as *Joſeph* did that from his *Miſtreſs*; *Shall I do this, and ſin againſt God?* Thus turn away from ſin when it begins to enter.

Direct. 4. All appearance of ſin to be abſtained from.

In the fourth place, thus repelling the firſt motions of ſin, *Abſtain from all appearance of it.* That is *Pauls* advice to his *Theſſalonians*, 1 Theſ. 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil.* It is not enough for Chriſtians to abſtain from *apparent* ſins, known ſins, ſuch as every one judgeth ſo to be, but if there be but εἶδος πονηροῦ, *ſpecies mali*, any ſhew or *appearance* of evil in it, they muſt now ἀπέχειν, *abſtain* from it. Upon this account it was that the Apoſtle willed thoſe Primitive

mitive Chriſtians, who lived in Idolatrous times, to *abſtain from meats offered to Idols*, 1 Cor. 8. Not that it was ſimply in it ſelf unlawfull to eat of them; for afterwards, in ſome caſes, he giveth them a Licenſe ſo to do, to *buy whatſoever was ſold in the Shambles, and to eat of it, asking no queſtion for Conſcience ſake*, Cap. 10. verſ. 25. though it ſo happened (as ſometimes it did) that ſome of the meat which had been offered to an Idol ſhould be brought to the Market, and there ſet to ſale, and they ſhould have bought it, he willeth them not to make any ſcruple of the eating of it. But when there was an appearance of evil in it, as there was when they ſhould go into the *Idols Temple*, their *Idol-feaſts*, and there eat of it, now he requires them not to do it: 1 *Cor.* 8. 9, 10. in as much as this, proving a ſtumbling to their brethren, might alſo become a ſin to them, as it followeth, *verſ.* 12. And let this advice take place with us: Take we heed, not onely of the *ſubſtance*, but even of the *ſhadow* and appearance of ſin. What ever looks like ſin, be we ſhie of it, and keep afar off from it, *hating even the garment ſpotted of the fleſh*, (as St. *Jude* adviſeth) *Jude*, *v.* 23.

And whileſt we abſtain from all appearance of ſin, avoid we alſo all *Occaſions* of it; all ſuch things as by ſtirring our corruption may prove incentives to it. This is that which *Solomon* intends in that advice which he giveth, *Prov.* 23. 31. *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright*; when it ſparkleth, as the moſt generous

Direct. 5. All Occaſions of ſin to be avoided.

Wine uſeth to do; this may be an occaſion of intemperance (as drinking of Healths, for the moſt part, is,) and upon that account he willeth to beware of it. And upon the like account he warneth not to come neer where the *Harlot* dwelleth, *Prov.* 5. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe,* Even as where the *Plague* is, men, being afraid of the infection, will not come nigh the Door of the houſe; ſo he would have thoſe who would keep themſelves from that ſin of Uncleanneſs to take heed of the occaſion of it. Upon this account it was that *Joſeph* was ſo ſhie of his *Miſtreſſes* company, *he would not lie by her, or be with her,* Gen. 39. 10. And upon the ſame account do we, as much as we may, avoid evil company. *Come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing.* Iſai. 52. 11. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Hereby many an unwary ſoul hath been trepanned; by not ſhunning the occaſions of evil they have fallen into it. As *Tertullian* tells us of a Chriſtian woman, that repairing to a *Theatre*, a *Stage-play*, was there poſſeſſed by the *Devil*, for which he gave this Reaſon, *Inveni in meo, I found her within my own juriſdiction.* Would we be kept free from ſin, take heed of the occaſions of it, and ſo keep at what diſtance from it we can.

Tertul. lib. de Spectac.

Direct. 6. God to be ſought unto for his Preſervation.

To all which may and muſt be added. *Seek unto God* by earneſt, importunate, and inceſſant Prayer, that he would keep and preſerve us, as from all other evils, ſo eſpecially from the evil of ſin. This our *Saviour*, in that Form of Prayer

er which he hath ſet us, hath taught us to do, to pray unto his and our Father, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, Matth. 6. 13. ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, from the *Evil one*, Satan, or *the Evil*, the Evil of ſin, not leaving us to him, or to our ſelves; his Temptations, or our own Corruptions; his Subtilty, or our own Infirmity: Which if he do, we cannot but expect to be overcome by theſe Enemies of ours. And therefore let this be our daily requeſt unto him, That by and through the aſſiſtance of his Spirit in us, the Spirit of wiſdom and ſtrength, he would direct and enable us to that which of our ſelves we are not able to do, to keep ſuch a watch and ward over our ſelves, as that we may not be ſurprized. *Except the Lord keep the City the watch-man waketh but in vain*, Pſal. 127. 1. And ſo, except the Lord, by his Grace and Spirit, keep a watch in us, and over us, all our endeavours will be but in vain. And therefore, not truſting at all in our own ſtrength, (which is but weakneſs) thus *commit we our ſouls unto God*, making our frequent and earneſt addreſſes unto him, that through his power we may be ſo kept unto ſalvation, as that we may not ſin againſt him. And ſo I have now done with the *Reaſon* here aſſigned by *David* for this his Circumſpection over his ways, as looked upon in a general way, *That I ſin not*. Come we now to that particular which herein he had a ſpecial eye at, *That I ſin not*:

With my Tongue.

Thus I am now come to that which (as before

The Special Reason of *Davids* taking up this Resolution.

I said) my eye was chiefly upon when I took this *Text* in hand. Wherein we have an account given of what it was that induced *David*, at this time, to take up this *Resolution*, of being so cautious and watchfull over himself, and over all his ways; This he did with a special eye to his *Tongue*, that he might not therewith offend; *That I sin not with my Tongue*; that is, in his words and speeches, which are uttered by the Tongue: This he resolveth to have a special care of. And so ought all Gods people to have; whilest they have an eye to their *hearts* and *hands*, they are also to have the like to their *Tongues*: As to their *Counsels* and *Actions*, so to their *Words*. That is the *Observation* which I am now to prosecute.

Observ. Christians to take special heed to their Tongues.

Gods people are to take special heed to their Tongues, that they sin not with them, that they offend not in their words. This is that which the *man after Gods own heart*, holy *David*, here at this time resolveth upon that he would do. And this he calls upon all others, at all times, to do, *Psal.* 34. 13. *Keep thy Tongue from evil.* Which Text we finde taken notice of by St. *Peter*, 1 Pet. 3. 10. *He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his Tongue from evil*, &c. This was *Davids* purpose, as elsewhere he tells us, *Psal.* 17. 3. *I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress.* And this purpose he prosecuted with answerable endeavours, setting a watch before the Door of his lips, taking heed to his Tongue, that that might not sin. And the like it behoyeth all Gods people to do, to set and keep

keep ſuch a watch over their Tongues.

A matter of great importance. So St. *James* looked upon it, who in his *Epiſtle* ſpends ſo much of his time and pains upon this Subject, the *Keeping and ordering of the Tongue*; concluding, that without this there could be no *true Religion*. *If any man among you* (ſaith he) *ſeemeth to be Religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans Religion is vain.* Μάταια θρησκεία. What ever profeſſion a man may make, deſiring to be accounted Religious, and what ever perſwaſion he may have of himſelf that he is Religious, yet without this there can be no reality, no true Piety. That, where it hath taken poſſeſſion of the *inward man*, it will make a man careful of the *outward*; being ſeated in the *heart* it will teach and learn a man this leſſon, as to look to all the *faculties* of the *Soul*, ſo to the *members* of the *Body*, that they may not be *inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin*; and among other, to the *Tongue*, to the right ordering of that: Which for a man to be able, in ſome good meaſure, to do, the ſame Apoſtle looked upon it as a good degree of proficiency in Religion. *If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man*, Jam. 3. 2. Hereby he ſheweth that he hath attained to a good degree of perfection. Now theſe are two things that all Chriſtians are to have a reſpect unto; Firſt, To ſee and make ſure that their *Religion* which they profeſs be in them *ſound* and *ſincere*, θρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος, (as St. *James* there calls it,) *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God*, Jam. 1. 27. not falſe and coun-

counterfeit, but real; that there be in them not meerly an outward ſhew, μόρφωσις εὐσεβείας (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.) *a form of godlineſs*, but δύναμις, the *Power* of it. And then, to *ſtrive after Perfection. Finally, Brethren, be perfect*, (it is *Pauls* valediction, his farewel to his *Corinthians*) 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. This Chriſtians cannot here expect to attain, to be abſolutely perfect; yet they are to ſtrive after it, that they may be perfect; and that, as in all their *Works*, *Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work*, (it is the Apoſtles prayer for his *Hebrews*,) Heb. 13. 21. ſo in their *Words*, that their *Tongues* may be ſo ordered that they ſin not with them. To which end they are to keep a ſpecial watch over them, to take heed to them.

Reaſ. And great *Reaſon* there is why they ſhould do ſo. Divers *Reaſons* may be aſſigned for it: Reduce them to two Heads, ſome *General*, other more *Special.*

I. General Reaſons.

I. In *General.* Chriſtians are to take heed to their *Words* as well as to their *Works*, in as much as

1. God heareth all their words.

1. *God taketh a like notice of both*: As he ſeeth the one, ſo he heareth the other. *There is not a word in my tongue but thou knoweſt it altogether*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 139. 4. Whileſt it is in the tongue, before it be uttered, he is privy to it; and being uttered, though never ſo privately, never ſo ſecretly whiſpered, he takes notice of it, knowing it *altogether*, having a perfect knowledge of the meaning and intention of it: This men always

ways have not, being often deceived by words, being flattering and deceitful; but ſo cannot God be; he heareth them, and hearing underſtandeth them, and that perfectly.

2. And hearing of them, being evil words, he is *offended* and *provoked* by them; by *Words* as well as *Works*. *Their Tongues and their Doings are againſt the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory*, (ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*, ſpeaking of the *Jews*,) Iſai. 3. 8. The one doth not offend his *Eye* more then the other doth his *Ear*; both which are in him of a like purity.

2. Being evil words, he is offended by them.

3. And whileſt God thus heareth them, and is offended by them, they whoſe Tongues utter them muſt *give an account of them*, and be *judged according* to them. So our *Saviour* tells the *Phariſees*, in that obvious Text, *Matth.* 12. 36. *I ſay unto you, that every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment: For by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned.* By thy *words*, as well as thy *works*.

3. All muſt give an account of their words, and be judged by them.

II. Theſe *Reaſons* are *General*, to which annex ſome ſpecial. Chriſtians are to have a ſpecial regard to their *Tongues*; next to their *Hearts* to look to them, So the *Wiſeman* adviſeth, *Prov.* 4. where exhorting all to have a Religious care over themſelves, he begins with the *Heart*, *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, verſ. 23. Then, in the next Verſe, he cometh to the *Tongue*; *Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverſe lips put far from thee*, verſ. 24. Then to the *Eyes* and *Feet*, in the Verſes following. Next to the *Heart*,

Special Reaſons.

Heart, it ſhould be a Chriſtians care to ſee to the right ordering of his *Tongue*, to keep it from ſin; and that,

1 The Tongue an excelllent Member.

1. In regard of the *Excellency of that Member*. The *Tongue* it is the *glory of a man*: So we finde it in Scripture often called. *Therefore my heart is glad* (ſaith *David*) *and my glory rejoyceth*, Pſal. 16. 9. *My glory*, meaning his *Tongue*. So St. *Peter* expounds it, *Act.* 2. 26, where, citing that Text from *Davids* mouth, he puts *Tongue* for *Glory*, *Therefore did my heart rejoyce, and my Tongue was glad.* And ſo again, *Pſal.* 57. 57. 8. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will ſing and give praiſe: Awake up my glory*; my Tongue: Which is called *the Glory of man*, in as much (1.) as it is endued with a faculty wherein Man excelleth all other Creatures. Other Creatures they have *Tongues* too, but they have not the faculty of *Speech*; they have Tongues, but they ſpeak not, being either altogether dumb (as Fiſhes are,) or however not ſpeaking, as Man doth; who, ſpeaking articulately, by his Tongue uttereth the Conceptions of his Minde. *Lingua animi index*, Mans Tongue is the Interpreter of his Minde, ſo as others thereby come to know what is in his heart. And it is an Inſtrument whereby *Man glorifieth God*, ſpeaking and ſinging to his praiſe and glory; declaring and ſetting forth his great and wonderfull Works, to which end chiefly it is given unto Man. *Thou haſt girded me with gladneſs* (ſaith *David*) *to the end that my glory* (that is, my *Tongue*) *may ſing praiſe unto thee*, Pſal. 30. 12. *O my God, my*

my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe, even with my glory, Pſal. 108. 1. Now man ſhould have a ſpecial care that his *Excellency* be not *debaſed*, nor his *Glory* turned into *ſhame*. It was that which *David* complained of againſt his malitious enemies, who were continually plotting and projecting againſt him to dethrone him: *They onely* (ſaith he) *conſult to caſt him down from his Excellency*, Pſal. 62. And again, *Pſal.* 4. 2. *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into ſhame?* That was their deſign, to defeat and diveſt him of that Majeſty, honour, and dignity, which was looked upon as his *Excellency* and *Glory*, and to pour ſhame and contempt upon him. And the like do men upon themſelves, when being regardleſs and careleſs of their *tongues* they ſuffer them to run wild, and to utter that which is evil, accomodating them to vile and ſinful uſes and purpoſes, ſuch as do not become them; now by this means they turn their *Glory* and *Excellency* into ſhame, making their *Tongues* the *Trumpets*, the Inſtruments to declare and ſound forth the wretchedneſs and frothineſs of their hearts. So as it were better for a man to have no tongue, then a tongue ſo uſed; better be dumb, then have a wicked tongue. The abuſe of the tongue is a great depravation of it, perverting it from its proper uſe, and croſſing that end for which it was given unto man; which in the Creation of it was of great excellency.

2. Looking upon it in mans Corrupted ſtate and condition, here we ſhall find the *Tongue*, as other of the members, very *ſubject to miſcarry*, to *ſin*.

2. Being corrupted, it is ſubject to miſcarry.

ſin. That I ſin not with my tongue, ſaith *David* here, intimating that he apprehended himſelf prone and ſubject ſo to do. And ſo are the beſt of Saints; the moſt ſanctified tongues are ſubject to miſcarry, to ſin; or rather (as the Text hath it) *men* to ſin with their *Tongues*. So it is, the *members* of the *Body* are but *Inſtruments* for the *Soul* to act by. It is the *Soul* that is the proper ſeat of ſin. That being corrupted and poyſoned, it diffuſeth that Corruption, that poyſon, through all the members of the Body, ſo as they (if not looked to) become Inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin. So the Apoſtle hath it, *Rom.*6.13. *Neither yield ye your members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin. Your members*; the faculties of your Souls, and members of your Bodies, which are as Inſtruments to the Soul. Ὅπλα; Either like *tools* which Artificers work with, or *weapons* which Soldiers fight with, being uſed to ſuch ends and purpoſes as the ſoul employs them in, either for good, or evil. Such is the *hand* wherewith one man *laboureth*, another *ſtealeth*; and ſuch is the *tongue* wherewith one man *bleſſeth*, another *curſeth* (as St. *James* hath it, *Jam.*3.9.) So as ſin is not radically, or properly in the *Tongue*, no more then in other of the members, but onely as it is infected and poyſoned by the Soul. As in diſeaſes of the *Body*, in Feavers, *&c.* the heart and other inwards being inflamed, the *Tongue* partakes of it, ſhewing the diſtemper in the colour of it; ſo is it in the ſpiritual diſeaſes and diſtempers of the *ſoul*; the heart, the ſoul being corrupted, poyſoned with ſin, it

breaketh

breaketh forth, and putteth forth it ſelf in and by the Tongue: which ſinneth *Extramittendo*, by venting of that inward Corruption; as other of the members, the ſenſes, Eye, and Ear, *&c.* do *Intromittendo*, by letting in ſuch objects into the ſoul, as whereby ſin is conceived. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, Mat. 12. 34. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies*, Mat. 15. 19. Thus doth the *Tongue* come to ſin, by being as a *Pump* to the *Well*, or a *Pipe* to the *Ciſtern*, wanting the inordinate paſſions of the Soul. So as though this diſeaſe be not in it *Idiopathetick*, yet *Sympathetick* it is, though not properly inherent in it, yet acted by it, as it agreeth and complieth with the ill diſpoſed ſoul. Thus is the *Tongue* ſubject, and if not looked to, prone to ſin.

3. And that *very ſubject*, very prone ſo to do, more then *any other members* of the Body. The Eye, the Ear, the Hand, they are all ſubject to ſin, to be inſtrumental in the conceiving, or bringing of it forth, but none like the *Tongue*; which as it conſiſteth of many parts, *Bone, Fleſh, Nerves, Arteries*, and *Muſcles*, almoſt as many (ſaith one) as there are *letters* in the *Alphabet*, therein exceeding moſt, (if not all) the members of the Body, though of far greater quantity, ſo it hath more ways to extravagate and run out then any other; being the moſt unruly member in the Body; yea, the moſt unruly of all Creatures. So St. *James* ſets it forth, *Jam.* 3. 8. *Every kind of beaſts, and of birds, and of ſerpents, and things in the Sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind,*

3. And that more then any other member.

kind, but the Tongue can no man tame; It is an unruly evil. Thus in former times it hath been, and ſtill is. Beaſts and Fowls, though never ſo fierce, never ſo wild, yet by humane art and induſtry they have been, and may be tamed; and ſo have *ſerpents*, ſome of which have been ſo meekned, as that men and women have carried them without danger in their boſoms; and though venomous creatures, yet they have been, and daily are made ſerviceable to humane uſes; as *fiſhes* alſo are, ſome of which have been brought to receive meat from the hands of their Maſters. *But the tongue can no man tame.* No one man can tame the tongue of *another*; ſo *Grotius* and ſome others expound it: however by ſevere puniſhments it may be reſtrained, yet not tamed, the nature of it not altered. No nor yet his *own Tongue*, (which I conceive to be rather there intended.) This can no man of himſelf do; not without the aſſiſtance of divine and ſpecial grace: neither is there afforded to any ſuch an abſolute concurrence of that grace, as to do it wholly and perfectly: whereupon it is (as we have heard) that this *Apoſtle* calleth ſuch a one as offendeth not *with his tongue, a perfect man.* In it ſelf the *Tongue* of man, as now corrupted, and not changed by grace, it is (as he there calleth it) *an unruly evil*, Ἀκατάσχετον κακὸν, *Malum quod coerceri non poteſt*, an evil which cannot be kept in. No, though nature hath incloſed it, (as Wild beaſts, Lyons, and Bears, and Tigres, are wont to be in their grates, to which cuſtom the Apoſtle is conceived there to allude) and that with a double fence

fence or pale, the *Teeth*, and the *Lips*, yet ſtill it will not be bounded, but is ready upon all occaſions (as thoſe wild Beaſts are) to break forth; there being nothing more hard, more difficult, then to rule and govern that member.

4. And as the Tongue is thus ſubject to miſcarry, ſo thoſe *miſcarriages are of dangerous conſequence.* An *Evil Tongue* is a *great Evil*, very hurtful, and that both to a *mans ſelf*, and *others*. Both which are comprehended in the following words of that Text, *Jam.* 3. 8. where the Tongue is ſaid to be *full of deadly poyſon.* Thus is it with ſome *beaſts*, they carry their poyſon in, or under their *Tongues*, as the *Asp*, or *Adder.* And ſo is it with man, having an unſanctified and ungoverned tongue, he carrieth *poyſon* in it. And that Ἰὸν θανατήφορον, *deadly poyſon*; ſo as being it ſelf poyſoned, it is very dangerous, and that (as I ſaid) both to the *owner* of it, and to *others*.

4. The miſcarriages of the Tongue of dangerous conſequence.

1. To the *Owner* of it, in as much as it hath an influence upon the whole man. So St. *James* ſets forth the nature and uſe of it in the former part of that Chapter; where he maketh uſe of two familiar, but apt ſimilitudes, to illuſtrate and ſet forth the truth hereof. The former taken from a *Bit*, or *Bridle*, which though a ſmall matter, yet ruleth the horſe; *Behold, we put bitts in the horſes mouthes, that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body*, ver. 3. The other from a *Helm*, or *Rudder* of a ſhip, which though a ſmall piece of timber, yet ſteareth the Veſſel though never ſo big. *Behold alſo the ſhips, which though they be ſo great, and are driven of fierce winds,*

1. To the owner of it.

yet are turned about with a very ſmall helm, ver. 4. Of ſuch uſe is the *Tongue* unto man, though a ſmall member in compariſon of the Body, yet it hath an influence upon the whole man, ſo as the well or ill ordering of that tendeth much to his peace and wellfare, or trouble and damage: If well ordered, it keepeth a man from many evils; like as the holding in of the bitt keepeth the horſe from ſtumbling, and the right ſtearing of the helm keepeth the ſhip from Rocks and Sands. Thus the well ordering of the tongue keepeth a man from many both ſins, and troubles. *Who ſo keepeth his mouth, and his tongue, keepeth his ſoul from troubles*, Prov. 21. 23. *He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life*, Prov. 13. 3. and may be a means of procuring him much good: *A man ſhall eat good by the fruit of his lips*, (ſaith the verſe there foregoing.) *What man is he that deſireth life, and loveth to ſee good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil*, (ſaith *David* in that Text forecited) *Pſal.* 34. 12, 13. On the other hand, if miſ-governed and diſordered, now it expoſeth to many and great dangers, and that both *Temporal*, and *Spiritual*. *Temporal*; hereby men are oft-times brought into great troubles. *The wicked is ſnared by the trangreſſion of his lips*, Prov. 12. 13. *A fools mouth is his deſtruction, and his lips are the ſnare of his ſoul*, Prov. 18. 7. So had *Nabals* rayling tongue been to him, when he reviled *David* as he did, and gave ſuch harſh language to his ſervants, had not his wife *Abigail* timely and wiſely interpoſed, (as we have the ſtory) 1 *Sam.* 25. And King *Solomon* hearing

ing what *Adonijah* had ſpoken, it being reported to him by his mother; *he ſware by the Lord, ſaying, God do ſo to me, and more alſo, if Adonijah have not ſpoken this word againſt his own life*, 1 King. 2. 23. Thus thoſe words which malicous tongues ſhoot like arrows at others, oft-times rebound and wound themſelves. And as Temporal, ſo *Spiritual* Evils, evils of ſin; which being acted and commited by the *tongue*, leave a guilt upon the whole man. Thence is that advice of the *Preacher*, Eccleſ. 5. 6. *Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin*; that is, thy ſelf. So the word *fleſh* is often uſed, in Scripture, for the whole man, as the word *Body* alſo is by St. *James*, Jam. 3. 6. where ſpeaking of an unruly tongue he ſaith, *It is a world of iniquity, defiling the whole body*: that is, the whole man, whom it leaveth a foul blot upon, beſides the guilt of the ſin thereby committed. Such Evils a diſordered tongue, not taken heed to, bringeth upon a mans ſelf. Many evils *here*, and in the end *everlaſting wrath*. The tongue which is here *ſet on fire of hell*, (as St. *James* there ſaith an unruly tongue is,) ſhall (unleſs that fire be quenched by the water of true repentance,) burn in hell hereafter, where it ſhall not find a drop of water to cool it, no more then *Dives* could.

2. And as it is thus hurtful to a mans ſelf, ſo to *others*; who are hereby often wounded. Though not in their *Bodies*, yet in that which is better. 2. To others, wounding them.

1. In Their *good Names*: *A good name is rather to be choſen then great riches*, Prov. 22. 1. 1. In their good Names.

A good name is better then precious oyntment, Eccles. 7. 1. Nothing more dear to a man then this. Now in this is a man often wounded by a slanderous tongue, or the tongue of a tale-bearer, as *Solomon* saith of it, *Prov.* 18.8. *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost part of the belly*; wounding mens reputations irrecoverably, piercing deep, to the great detriment and hurt of the persons spoken of. And the like saith the Psalmist of a malicious tongue, which he compareth to the *Serpents sting*, or *Adders poyson*, Psal. 140.3. where speaking of his inveterate enemies who sought his ruine, he saith, *They have sharpened their tongues like a Serpent, and Adders poyson is under their lips.* *Serpents* carry their stings in their *tongues*, and the *Asp*, or *Adder*, his poyson in a bladder under it, which is the worst of poysons, being (as *Aristotle* saith of it) Ἀνίατον, incurable; and herewith they sting and empoyson those whom they seize and fasten upon. And even so do malicious persons, they carry a sting, and poyson, in and under their tongues, which in their words they vent, casting reproaches and scandals upon those whom they bear ill will to; and so poysoning their good names, wounding their reputations, which they can do at the greatest distance. So much *David* intimates, *Psal.* 64. 3. where he compareth such a *Tongue* to a *Sword*, and a *Bow*, and such *words* to *arrows*: *Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the perfect.* The sword woundeth neer hand,

Aristot. Historia Animalium, lib. 8.

hand, the Arrow afar off. And ſo doth the Tongue by calumnious and reproachfull ſpeeches; it not onely woundeth thoſe that are preſent, but thoſe that are abſent; where-ever they be, though in the remoteſt part of the world, the Tongue will reach them.

2. And thus wounding them in their good names, it may do the like in their *Eſtates*, which, through the falſe accuſations of a lying tongue, they may be deprived of, and by a deceitful tongue cheated of. 2. In their Eſtates.

3. And as their Eſtates, ſo their *Lives* may hereby be endangered; as our Saviours was, by the miſ-report of what he ſpake concerning the deſtroying of the *Temple of his Body*, which they which heard him applied to the *Temple of God*. *Matth.* 26.61. 3. Endangering their Lives.

4. However, ſuch a Tongue is a *Diſturber of the Peace*. Being un unruly Tongue it is *Malum inquietum*, (as the Vulgar *Latine* renders that word, *Jam.* 3. 8.) an *unquiet Evil*, cauſing diſtractions, and diviſions, and diſturbances amongſt men. Being it ſelf ſet on fire of Hell, it will ſet on fire. So that Apoſtle there ſaith of it, *verſ.* 5. *The tongue is a little member*, &c. *Behold how great a matter* (ἡλίκην ὕλην, *how much wood*, or combuſtible matter,) *a little fire kindleth! And the Tongue is a fire*, &c. *and ſetteth on fire the courſe of nature, and it is ſet on fire of hell.* A ſmall ſpark, being blown, may conſume a World. And ſo an evil and unruly Tongue, being enraged, and ſo inflamed, it may ſet on fire τὸν τρόχον τ γενέσεως, the *Courſe* or frame of nature; ſtirring 4. Diſturbing their Peace.

up, not onely private diſſentions, but publick commotions, ſo putting the World into a combuſtion.

5. Empoyſoning their Souls

5. And, whileſt it thus hurteth others as to the outward man, it may alſo do the like as to the *inward*, even reaching to their *ſouls*, empoyſoning them. Thus hath many a ſoul been poyſoned, by the profane, looſe, lewd, and licentious tongues of others, which convey the poyſon of ſin through the ear into the heart. Thus *Evil communications* are ſaid to *corrupt good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33. Theſe, and many other ways may the Tongue, if not looked to, do hurt to others.

6. Striking at God himſelf.

6. To all which may be added, Being an unruly Tongue, it will be ready *to ſtrike and let flie even at God himſelf*. So the *Pſalmiſt* ſets forth the daring boldneſs of ſome wicked and ungodly men, *Pſal.* 73. 9. *They ſet their mouth againſt the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.* Not onely daring to revile and rail upon men, of what condition ſoever they be, but even to blaſpheme *God* himſelf. Thus ſome impious and profane perſons have done, and too many daily do; who, in their helliſh Oaths and Imprecations, ſwearing and curſing, do (as he ſaith) even *ſet their mouthes againſt the Heavens*, blaſpheming the Name of God; if not ſpeaking directly againſt him, yet ſpeaking unreverently and unworthily of Him, of his Word, Works, Ordinances, Servants; yea, even Gods own people are ſubject, at ſome times, in their afflictions and diſtreſſes, to repine and murmur againſt him. This

was

was the thing which *David* here feared himſelf for, leſt he ſhould do this in his extremity; and hereupon it was that he took up this *Reſolution*, to take heed, as to all his *Ways*, ſo ſpecially to his *Tongue*, that he might not therewith ſo *ſin* againſt God.

Thus I have done with the *Doctrinal* part of this *Leſſon*: From which I ſhall now paſs to that which I chiefly aim at, the *Application*. Which I ſhall again direct, as in the former Doctrines I have done, onely two ways; by way of *Reprehenſion*, and *Exhortation*.

I. By way of *Reprehenſion*; which we ſhall finde taking hold of many; and I wiſh it may be taken hold of by, and brought home to, the ſouls of thoſe to whom it belongeth. I ſhall reduce them to two Heads. *Uſe* 1. Reprehenſion, of divers.

1. Was *David* thus cautious and careſull over his Tongue, and ought all Gods people ſo to be? what ſhall we then ſay to thoſe who are *altogether careleſs* of theirs? Such there are too many every where; who, as they do not indeed fear any ſin, as it is a ſin, ſo leaſt of all ſinning with their *tongues*. Their *Tongues*, they are their *own*; ſo they look upon them, as *David* ſets it forth, *Pſal.* 12. 4. *Who have ſaid, With our tongue will we prevail, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* So do wicked and ungodly men, (for of ſuch he there ſpeaketh,) they look upon themſelves as abſolute Lords, having an abſolute and uncontrollable Sovereignty over themſelves, and in ſpecial over their *tongues*, ſo as they may ſay what they liſt: Which accordingly they do, letting 1. Such as are altogether careleſs of their Tongues.

ting their tongues looſe, to run riot, to ſpeak and utter *quicquid in buccam*, what-ever cometh next to their minde, be it never ſo foul, never ſo horrid, whether againſt *God* or *Man*. So as to them may truly be applyed that Text of the *Pſalmiſt*, even now mentioned, *They ſet their mouth againſt the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth*; ſpeaking blaſphemouſly of God, and reproachfully of their Neighbours; tearing (as much as in them lies) the Names of both in pieces at their pleaſures, by ſwearing, curſing, reviling, ranting. So long as the *Laws of Men* do not take hold of them, but that they can evade the penalties of them, as for the *Laws of God*, they regard them not: And as for ſcurrilous, laſcivious, lewd, filthy ſpeaking, this is as familiar to them as their native language. Thus do they ſpit and vomit up the poyſon of their hearts at their mouthes; and from this (being habituated and accuſtomed to it) they will not be reclaimed, being as deaf to any good counſel that ſhall be given them, as the *Adder* is ſaid to be to the *charm*. So *David* ſets forth this their obſtinacy, *Pſal.* 58. 4, 5. where ſpeaking of his own malicious and inveterate enemies, and ſo of obſtinate ſinners like unto them, he ſaith, Their *poyſon is like the poyſon of a ſerpent; they are like the deaf Adder, that ſtoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never ſo wiſely.* A proverbial ſimilitude; ſo it is by *Expoſitors* looked upon: Not that *David* aſſerts any reality in what he ſaith concerning that Creature, (which yet ſome of the *Ancients* are

ſaid

ſaid to have given credit to, telling us how that the *Aſp*, or *Adder*, ſeeing the Charmer coming nigh her, was wont, by a natural inſtinct, to lay one of her ears cloſe to the ground, and to ſtop the other with her tail, that ſo ſhe might not hear his charm; but this no *Naturaliſts* are ſaid to make mention of;) much leſs may he be conceived hereby, if there were any ſuch thing obſervable in or before his time, to juſtifie the practice of it, ſo as to approve of ſuch *Magical Spells*, which are ſo expreſly condemned, *Deut.* 18. 10, 11. But, as it ſeemeth, there was ſome ſuch proverbial ſpeech then commonly in uſe among the *Hebrews*. And this he accommodates to his preſent purpoſe, as ſerving very fitly to ſet forth the obduracy of thoſe malicious enemies of his, who were ſo hardened in their evil courſes and practices, in acting and ſpeaking againſt him, that they would not hearken to any counſel that could be given them for their better Information and Reformation. And, truly, even ſo is it with ſome, and too many, among us; what ever advice and counſel can be given unto them by the Miniſters of God, or others; what ever *Precepts* are preſſed, what ever threatnings are denounced, yet they ſtop their ears againſt all, ſtill taking the like liberty to let looſe their tongues, and to vent the poyſon of their hearts in lewd and licentious ſpeeches. Too plain an evidence that what the Church complaineth of. *Iſai.* 63. 17. is verified and made good in them, that *their hearts are hardened from the fear of God*; and that they are given up to that Νῦς ἀδόκιμος which the Apoſtle

poſtle ſpeaketh of, ſaying that the *Gentiles* were ſo given up, *Rom.* 1.28. *a Reprobate mind*, a minde wholly void of judgment (as that word ſignifieth,) which, if they were not, they would never dare to let their tongues run as they do. Now as for ſuch, let them know, that as, at the preſent, they are in Gods eyes, Ἀδόκιμοι, *Reprobates*, diſ-approved and abhorred by him; ſo, ſooner or later, without deep remorſe for theſe ſins, and hearty repentance and reformation, they ſhall finde and feel his wrath and diſpleaſure poured out upon them: He will let flie the Arrows of his Vengeance at them who thus ſhoot at him, letting flie the Arrows of their wicked Words; which, though not directly aimed at him, yet light upon him, being ſins againſt him. So the *Pſalmiſt* tells them what they muſt expect, *Pſal.* 64. 7, 8. *God ſhall ſhoot at them with his Arrows, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded. So they ſhall make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves*; bringing upon themſelves the Judgments of God. Either *Temporal*, in this life; of which there have been many inſtances; Such as have been profane Swearers and Blaſphemers, *&c.* how have *their own tongues fallen upon themſelves*? how have they pulled down the vengeance of God, which hath broke forth upon them in ſome dreadfull Judgments? So (as the Pſalmiſt there ſaith, in the cloſe of that Verſe laſt mentioned) *all that have ſeen them have fled away*, being ſtruck with conſternation and amazement at what they have ſeen or heard, they being thereby made, even like *Lots* Wife, turned into *Pillars of ſalt*, made ſpectacles of vengeance, and laſting monuments of wrath

to

to all ſucceeding ages, for the deterring of all others from daring to imitate and follow them. But if not here, yet *hereafter*. Thoſe *tongues* which are thus *ſet on fire of hell*, (as I ſaid before, ſo I ſpeak it again, that it may make the deeper impreſſion upon the ſpirits of thoſe who are in this kind guilty) without ſpeedy repentance and reformation, they ſhall *burn in hell* to all eternity; where (as I ſaid,) *Dives-like*, they ſhall not find a *drop of water* to cool them. Here is the firſt ſort of thoſe whom this *Reprehenſion* taketh hold of, ſuch as are thus altogether careleſs and fearleſs, not at all taking heed leſt they ſin with their Tongues.

2. A ſecond Rank there are, who though they be not altogether careleſs, yet they are not *ſo careful* as they ought to be. Though their *Tongues* be not altogether *unbridled*, as the former were, yet they do not *hold in the reins* ſo ſtreight as they ought to do. Of theſe there are divers ſorts.

2. Others not ſo careful of them as they ought to be.

1. Some who are afraid of *greater and groſſer evils*, keeping their tongues from them, but not ſo from *leſſer*. As for *Blaſpheming* of God, this they abhor, but yet in ſpeaking of him they do not uſe that reverence which they ought to do, too often taking his Name in vain, by taking it into their mouths upon every ſleight and trivial occaſion. A practice too common every where. How many are there who make it their uſual cuſtom, to uſher in their ſpeeches with ſome of the ſacred names of the divine Majeſty? beginning with *O Lord*, *O God*, *O good God*, *O Jeſu*, *O*

1. Some careful onely of greater evils.

O Christ, God forgive me, Lord have mercy upon us, &c. And as for *swearing*, though they abstain from gross and damnable Oathes, yet as for petty ones they are too familiar in their mouthes, and they make no bones of them; as by their *Faith* and *Troth*, *As God shall save me*, *I protest before God*, *I vow*, *I vow to God*, *As I live*, &c. And so for *Imprecations*, cursing of themselves or others, though those horrid ones of *God damn me*, *The Devil take thee*, &c. will not down with them, yet those others, of *Would I might never breathe*; *Hang them*, &c. these frequently fall from their lips. And as for *filthy speeches*, those which are loathsome to chaste ears, being broad and open, they will not foul their mouthes with them, but as for wanton, loose, scurrilous jests, though exceeding the bounds of civility and modesty, these they make nothing of. And so for *slandering of their neighbours*; though they will not designedly coyn, or tell a lye to defame him, yet they will be ready to take up an evil report of him, and giving credit to it to do the ill office of a tale-bearer, reporting and divulging it to his disparagement. And whilst they speak meanly and uncharitably of others, they will be ready to speak highly, *too highly of themselves*; if not beyond what they deserve, yet beyond what it becometh their own tongues to utter. These, and many other like miscarriages of the *Tongue*, are very common and frequent every where. Which sheweth that there are many who have not the like care over their tongues as *David* had, nor as Gods people ought to have.

2. A ſecond ſort there are who come under this head; ſuch who though they do make conſcience of their *ways*, yet give too much liberty to their *tongues*; ſuffering them to expatiate and run wild in an extravagant way and manner, being given to *verboſity* and *loquacity*, to the multiplying of words beyond what is fitting for them, or any other, never thinking they can ſpeak too much, or yet enough. This we find righteous *Job* (though unjuſtly) charged with, and cenſured for, by his friend *Zophar*, *Job* 11.2. *Should a man full of talk be juſtified?* ever the better thought of for being *a man of lips* (as the Original there hath it,) full of words. Even this, as it bewrayeth a great deal of *folly*; *The mouth of fools poureth out fooliſhneſs*, Prov. 15.2. whereupon it is that the *Wiſeman* calleth ſuch (how wiſe ſoever they may think themſelves to be) by the name of *Fools*; *A prating fool ſhall fall*, Prov. 10. 8. which he repeateth again, *ver.* 10. fall into many dangers; ſo it is not be expected that it ſhould be without *ſin*. So he there alſo tells us, *ver.* 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin.* Men, or Women, being full of talk, they cannot but ſometime talk amiſs; ſo as in many words there will be ſome ſin.

2. Some given to verboſity and loquacity.

3. A third ſort there are, who though they do take heed to their tongues, and are careful of their words that they offend not, whether in the *quality*, or *quantity* of them, yet they are not ſo *at all times*, but that ſometimes they are overtaken, and forget themſelves. This do ſome in a time of *mirth*, at feaſts, or friendly meetings, when their

3. Some not Careful at all times.

their hearts being dilated, their tongues break looſe, venting ſome vain, light, and frothy diſcourſe, which, at other times, being in a compoſed frame and temper, they would not have given way to. Others being under ſome *ſad temptation*, their ſpirits being raiſed and troubled within them, their diſtempers may break forth in ſome paſſionate expreſſions, repining and murmuring even againſt God himſelf, as the Iſraelites in the Wilderneſs did; or being *provoked* and exaſperated by ſome unkind and uncivil uſuage from others, they may now bewray their paſſion in ſome unbecoming language. So the *Pſalmiſt* tells us of *Moſes*, that pattern of meekneſs, (for which he is commended, *Numb.* 12. 3 *Moſes was a very meek man*,) how that being *provoked by the Iſraelites at the waters of Marah, he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips*, Pſal. 106. 33. They provoking him by their murmuring againſt God and him for want of water, he breaketh forth upon them in ſome paſſionate language, calling the whole *Congregation*, being aſſembled before him, by the name of *Rebels*, as we find it, *Numb.* 20. 10. *Hear now, ye rebels*, (ſaith he) *muſt we fetch you water out of this Rock?* Thus the beſt of Saints may be, and few but at ſometimes are, by ſuch ways brought to miſcarry in their ſpeeches, and ſo to ſin with their *Tongues*, being not ſo heedful over them at all times, and in all places, as they ought to be.

To theſe I might yet add ſome other, who come within the verge of this *Reprehenſion*. And indeed, who is there that is wholly exempted from it

it? What man is there that is ſo perfect, as not at ſome time or other to offend with his Tongue? But leaving *Reprehenſion*, I ſhall paſs to that which (through Gods aſſiſtance) I ſhall inſiſt ſomewhat more largely upon, the latter branch of the *Application*, which is the *Uſe* of

Uſe 2. Exhortation. All to take heed of ſinning with their Tongues.

Exhortation. Was holy *David* thus watchful and careful over his Tongue; let all of us herein *propound him as a Pattern for our Imitation.* Be we at all times in like manner watchful over ours, taking heed that we *ſin* not withthem.

To excite whereunto, I ſhall not need to make uſe of any other *Arguments*, or *Motives*, then what I have already propounded as *Reaſons* for our ſo doing: which let us reflect upon. As thoſe *General Conſiderations*, of Gods taking notice of all our words, as well as our ways, his being provoked by evil words, the account which we are to give for vain and idle words; ſo thoſe *ſpecial* ones, the excellency of the tongue in the right uſe of it, the proneneſs of it to miſcarry, and that many ſeveral ways above any other member of the Body; the dangerous conſequence of thoſe miſcarriages, and that both in reference to a mans ſelf, who may thereby be wounded and hurt, and that both in the outward and inward man; and to others, who may thereby be wounded in their good names, damnified in their eſtates, endangered in their lives, diſturbed in their peace, yea, and poyſoned in their ſouls. All which being laid together may ſerve as ſufficient inducements to the ſetting of a ſtrict watch and ward over this unruly member, that ſo we may prevent all

thoſe

thoſe miſcarriages which, not being regarded, it is ſubject to.

The ſins of the Tongue many.

Which *miſcarriages* (as before I ſaid) are very many, of divers and ſeveral kinds. I ſhall not attempt to make any exact *Catalogue* of them all, onely ſingle out ſome of thoſe which are moſt obvious and common; which I ſhall reduce to three Heads, according to that three-fold Reference which a mans words ordinarily have, which reſpect either *God*, or his *Neighbour*, or *Himſelf*. Theſe are the three which are chiefly concerned in our words and ſpeeches. Now take we heed that we do not with our *Tongues* offend, or ſin againſt any of them.

Reduced to three Heads.

Had 1. Againſt God.

Againſt *God*; more immediately againſt him, whether in ſpeaking *of* him, or *to* him, or *from* him.

1. In ſpeaking *of* him. Here take we heed of that which the Third *Commandment* expreſly forbids, of *Taking the Name of the Lord our God in vain*: which whoſoever ſhall dare to do, *the Lord* (as it there followeth) *will not hold him guiltleſs*; will not ſuffer him to paſs unpuniſhed. Now this may be done, as in other ways, ſo ſpecially by the *Tongue*, which is conceived to be there principally intended, it being by that Law bound to the good abearing. And this take we heed of, of tranſgreſſing that Law with our *Tongues*. Where

1. In ſpeaking of him; where take heed.

1. Of Blaſpheming him; ſpeaking evil of him

1. Take we heed of *Blaſpheming* that Name, ſpeaking againſt God, or ſpeaking evil of him; whether *Directly*, or *Indirectly*.

1. *Directly*,

1. *Directly*, and *immediatly* blaſpheming *God* himſelf. A *Capital crime*, of a horrid nature, which under the Law was puniſhed with death. So the Lord being conſulted with in the caſe of that young man who was found guilty thereof, of *Blaſpheming the name of the Lord*, ordereth *Moſes* to proceed in judgment againſt him, *Lev.*24.14. *Bring him forth without the Camp, and let all the Congregation ſtone him.* And what was done in that particular caſe, he eſtabliſhes it for a general *Law*, requiring that the like puniſhment ſhould be inflicted upon all others guilty of the like Crime: *He that blaſphemeth the name of the Lord ſhall ſurely be put to death*, ver. 16. Such was the Law againſt *Blaſphemy* then under the *Law*, which ſurely ſtill ſtandeth in force under the *Goſpel*. Every of us take heed that we be not found in the leaſt degree guilty of it. Take heed that we do not thus *ſin with our Tongues*. This was that which *Jobs wife* (being therein the Devils inſtrument, as the firſt woman was, in tempting her husband) tempted him to do. He being in great extremity, and followed with a ſucceſſion of ſad and ſore Afflictions, *She ſaid unto him, Curſe God and die*, Job 2. 9. thereby intimating unto him, that by thus blaſpheming of him, he might procure that from him which he could not do by ſerving of him, to be freed of his troubles and vexations. And what ſhe would have put him upon, the *Devil* (who is *the Accuſer of the Brethren*) charged him with, that in caſe God ſhould try him to the purpoſe, he would not forbear to do it. *Put forth thine hand now* (ſaith he, 1. Directly and Immediately.

ſpeaking unto God,) *and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face*, Job. 1. 11. And again, *Cap. 2. ver. 5. Put forth thine hand now and touch his bone, and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* A thing which though it was falſly, by that *Father of lyes* (who therein ſpake as he would have had it,) charged upon him, yet others we find to be guilty of it, of thus blaſpeming of God in the day of their Calamity. So it is ſaid of the ſubjects of Antichriſts Kingdom, *Rev.* 16. 9. when the *Angel* was pouring out the *fourth vial* full of the wrath of God, upon the *Sun*, (whereby ſome underſtand *Antichriſt*, or the Popes temporal power over Kings, he making himſelf as the *Sun* in the firmament, in compariſon of whom all other Rulers and Governours are but as leſſer *ſtars*;) now (ſaith the Text,) *men were ſcorched with great heat, and blaſphemed the name of God.* And the like again upon the pouring out the *fifth vial* upon the *ſeat of the Beaſt* (the *City of Rome*, which ſhall then be deſtroyed, (as it is probably interpreted,) *They gnawed their tongues for pain, and blaſphemed the God of heaven, becauſe of their pains, and their ſores*, ver. 10, 11. Such diſtempers are unſanctified hearts ſubject unto in their extremities, even to ſtrike at God himſelf with their tongues, for inflicting thoſe plagues upon them. But this be we afraid and aware of. So was that righteous man, *Job*; Notwithſtanding the hand of God lay heavy upon him, preſſing him ſore, and following him with a ſucceſſion of ſharp and ſad trials, yet, *In all this Job ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly*, Job 1. laſt.

laſt. He did not ſin againſt God with his *Tongue*, ſo as to attribute *folly* unto him, (as the margin in our new Tranſlation there readeth it;) which had he done, it had been great fooliſhneſs in him. And the like care had holy *David*; who tells us how in his diſtreſs he demeaned himſelf, how he kept his mouth ſhut, *Pſal.* 39.9. *I was dumb* (ſaith he) *and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou, Lord, didſt it.* Thus did he in his greateſt extremity take heed to his *Tongue*, that he might not ſin againſt God by blaſpheming of him, ſpeaking ought againſt him. And this let all of us, above all ſins, be wary of, it being a ſin of a *horrid nature*; which it muſt needs be, being committed ſo directly and immediatly againſt *God* himſelf. So the *Jews* of old looked upon it. And thereupon it was (as is conceived) that they in ſpeaking of it were not wont to make uſe of the proper name, calling it *Blaſpheming* of God, which was a thing ſo execrable and deteſtable, that they could not endure ſo much as to hear it named, and therefore they adopted it with a word clean contrary, expreſſing it by *Bleſſing*. So it is uſed in that Text forecited, where *Jobs wife* tempteth him to *Curſe God*, the Original hath it, *Bleſs God*. And ſo in the Chapter foregoing, where *Job* expreſſing his fear and jealouſie concerning his Sons, leſt in their feaſting and revelling they ſhould forget God, and themſelves, and ſo ſpeak and utter, or at leaſt entertain ſome thoughts of God which were unworthy of him, he ſaith, *It may be that my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts*, Job 1.5. in the *Hebrew* it is, *Bleſſed God*.

So deteſtable was the *thing* unto them, that they could not endure ſo much as the *name* of it. And ſo let it be unto us. As *Paul* ſaith of thoſe two ſins, *Uncleanneſs* and *Covetouſneſs*, Eph. 5. 3. *Let it not be once named among you*; willing them to abhor the very mention of thoſe vices: So I ſay of this ſo horrid a ſin, *Blaſphemy*, let it not be *once named amongſt us*, I mean without abhorrence and deteſtation of the thing. And that of whatever it is that borders upon it, that cometh near unto it: whatever it is that befalleth us, take heed of quarrelling with God, of uttering a word againſt him. He being *Goodneſs* it ſelf, take heed of ſpeaking the leaſt evil of him; ſpeaking ought that may reflect upon any of his *Attributes*: As upon his *Power*, or *All-ſufficiency*; which the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs queſtioned, and ſo therein ſpake againſt God, *Pſal.* 78. 19, 20. *Yea, they ſpake againſt God, they ſaid, Can God furniſh a table in the wilderneſs? Can he give bread? Can he provide fleſh for his people?* which thing highly provoked God againſt them, as it there followeth, *ver.* 21. *Therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth, ſo a fire was kindled againſt Jacob, and anger alſo came up againſt Iſrael.* Or upon his *Wiſdom*, his *Juſtice*, his *Mercy*, his *Goodneſs*, &c. Take we heed of letting fall any word that may any ways fall upon *God* to his diſhonour. Of whom as we can never think, ſo much leſs ever ſpeak highly enough.

2. Indirectly and mediately, by ſpeaking evil of

2. And (ſecondly) whilſt we take heed of *Blaſpheming* the name of God thus *Directly* and *Immediately*,

Immediately, take heed alſo of doing it *Indirectly* and *mediately*, by reviling of his *Religion*, his *Servants*, his *Miniſters*, his *Ordinances*, his *Word*, or *Works*, every of which hath a reflection upon him.

1. Of his *Religion*, of ſpeaking evil of that, as the *Jews* did, who called Chriſtian Religion *Hereſie*, Act. 24. 14. *After the way which they call Hereſie ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers* (ſaith *Paul* to *Felix*, (before whom he was accuſed by the *Jews*.) And the like did the *Gentiles* of the *Jewiſh Religion*, though upon another account, as St. *Paul* tells the *Jews*, who made ſuch a *boaſt of the Law*, yet made no conſcience of it, *Rom.* 2. 24. *The Name of God is blaſphemed among the Gentiles through you.* The Heathens, among whom the Jews then lived, beholding them (ſome of them) not walking anſwerably to their Profeſſion, they ſpake reproachfully of their Religion, as if it could not be *Gods Religion*; or if it were, then he could not be the true God, ſo holy a God as he was pretended to be. So the Prophet *Ezekiel* (to whom the Apoſtle there hath an eye) ſaith that the Heathens of old did, *Ezek.* 36. 20. where the Lord complaining how the people of *Iſrael*, by not walking according to the Rules of his holy Law, had opened the mouthes of his and their enemies to blaſpheme his Religion, he ſaith, *They have profaned my holy Name, when they ſaid unto them, Theſe are the people of the Lord.* Thus profane perſons, ſeeing Profeſſors walk looſely and ſcandalouſly, they caſt this upon the Religion of Chriſt, from thence taking occa-

1. His Religion.

ſion to reproach and revile it. So much the Apoſtle giveth us to take notice of, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. where exhorting *Servants* to be dutifull to their *Maſters*, he preſſeth and enforceth the Exhortation with this Argument, *That the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed.* And the like he ſaith to *Wives*, Tit. 2. 5. where calling upon them to be *diſcreet, chaſte, keepers at home, obedient to to their own Husbands*, he adds, *That the Word of God be not blaſphemed*; evil ſpoken of, as if that gave any ſuch liberty to Servants, or Wives, as to refuſe to be dutifull and obedient to their Maſters and Husbands, though *Infidels.* And ſo St. *Peter*, ſpeaking of *ſeduced Profeſſors*, who, being drawn aſide by their *falſe Teachers*, ſhould walk licentiouſly, 2 *Pet.* 2. 2. he ſaith, *Many ſhall follow their pernicious* (or laſcivious) *ways, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhall be evil ſpoken of. By this means the Chriſtian Religion*, which ſheweth the onely true way to Heaven, and upon that account called Ὁδὸς τ ἀληθείᾳ, *The way of truth*, or *true way*, that (ſaith he) *ſhall in the latter times come to be blaſphemed*, βλασφημηθήσεται, evil ſpoken of, by thoſe who are no friends to it. Now this take we heed of, that we be not, upon what occaſion ſoever, tempted to this kinde of *Blaſphemy*: What-ever the lives of *Profeſſors* be, though they walk never ſo unanſwerably to their Profeſſion, giving never ſo many and great ſcandals, yet take we heed of falling foul upon *Religion* with our *Tongues*, ſo as to ſpeak evil of the ways of God for their ſakes.

2. And

2. And ſo (ſecondly) of ſpeaking evil of the *Servants of God*, reproaching of them, or ſpeaking againſt them, and that for their *Religions* ſake. Thus was Chriſt himſelf ſpoken againſt by the *Jews*, according as it was fore-told by old *Simeon* to *Mary*, Luk. 2. 34. *Behold, this Child is ſet for a ſign, which ſhall be ſpoken againſt.* Σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον. So he was in his own *Perſon*: And ſo he was afterwards in his *followers*, thoſe on whom his Name was called; *Do not they* (ſaith St. *James*, ſpeaking of *mercileſs oppreſſours*) *blaſpheme that worthy Name by which ye are called?* *Jam.* 2. 7. the Name of *Chriſt*, from whence Believers were called *Chriſtians*, reproaching Chriſt in them. So were the *Primitive Saints* uſed, having opprobrious names caſt upon them, called by the name of *Sectaries*. *We have found this man a peſtilent fellow, and a ring-leader of the Sect of the Nazarens*, that is the language of *Tertullus* the Oratour in his pleading againſt *Paul*, *Act.* 24. 5. And the *Jews*, when they ſaw *Paul* at *Rome*, tell him, *Act.* 28. 22. *As concerning this Sect, it is every where ſpoken againſt*, meaning the Profeſſion and Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, who are often ſpoken againſt for their Profeſſion ſake; *Being reproached for the Name of Chriſt*, (as St. *Peter* ſaith of the Chriſtians in his time, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14.)

2. Of his Servants for their Religions ſake.

And the like do others meet with for their *Practice*, for walking anſwerably to their *Profeſſion*, ſtrictly and preciſely; for this they are (it may be) not onely wondred at by ſome, but alſo evil thought and ſpoken of for it. So alſo were thoſe Primi-

tive Saints, as St. *Peter* there ſets it forth, in the former part of that Chapter: They being converted to Chriſtianity, and having renounced all thoſe ſinfull ways and courſe wherein they formerly walked, as other Gentiles did; now living according to the Goſpel Rule, *ſoberly, and righteouſly, and godly*, they were for this both wondred at, and evil ſpoken of, by thoſe among whom they lived. *Wherein* (ſaith he, *ver.* 4.) *they think it ſtrange that ye run not with them into the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you.* And is it not ſo with too many at this day, who ſeeing others living as becometh Chriſtians, walking ſtrictly and *preciſely*, (it is the Apoſtles word, *Eph.* 5. 15. *That ye walk circumſpectly*, ἀκριβῶς, *accuratè, preciſely*) in all the ways of God, and ſo by their ſtrictneſs condemning their licentiouſneſs, they are ready to take up this, as *David* did that *ſtone* which he threw at *Goliah*, and caſt it in their faces as a reproach, ſpeaking evil of them for it. So did *Michal*, when ſhe ſaw *David* dancing before the Ark, expreſſing his zeal in ſuch a manner as he did, ſhe jeered him for it, 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. Such jeerers there are every where, who caſt opprobrious names upon ſuch as are moſt zealous for God. Whence elſe are thoſe terms ſo common in the mouthes of profane perſons at this day, of *Preciſians*, *Puritans*? &c. wherewith they brand thoſe whom they have nothing to accuſe of, except it be (as *Daniels* enemies acknowledged concerning him, *Dan.* 6. 5.) *touching the Law of their God.* Now what is this but even to ſhoot at God and Chriſt, and to wound them through

through the ſides of thoſe his ſervants? So it is, they who ſpeak evil of the ſervants of God for their Religion ſake, in ſo doing they blaſpheme God and Chriſt. So ſaith *Peter*, in that Text before cited, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. where ſpeaking of Chriſtians being reproached for the Name of Chriſt by ſuch as did bear ill will to them and him, and comforting them againſt ſuch reproaches, he tells them, that *On their part he is evil ſpoken of* (βλασφημεῖται, he is *blaſphemed*,) *but on your part he is glorified*; viz. Chriſt himſelf, who being in his Saints, (*Chriſt in you*, Col. 1. 27.) is glorified by them in their bold profeſſion of him and conſtant adherence to him, and ſo evil ſpoken of in them. Thus is God and Chriſt blaſphemed in and through his ſervants, when they are evil ſpoken of for his ſake; which let all of us beware that we be not in any degree found guilty of.

3. And ſo, in ſpecial, of ſpeaking evil of his faithfull *Miniſters*, who are his *Servants* in a peculiar way; *Paul, a ſervant of Chriſt*, Rom. 1. 1. *A ſervant of God*, Tit. 1. 1. *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive*, 2 Tim. 2. 24. Such are all *Chriſtians*, in a general; but his *Miniſters*, in a ſpecial way; being his *Officers*, deputed, commiſſionated and authorized by him, as his *Agents*, his *Ambaſſadours*: *Now then we are Ambaſſadours for Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. And being ſo, take heed of reproaching and reviling them as *Miniſters*, for their Office and Function ſake, or for their Faithfulneſs in the diſcharge of it: Which who ſo doth he therein revileth *Chriſt* himſelf,

3. Of his Miniſters.

himſelf. That which is done to an *Ambaſſadour* as an *Ambaſſadour* reflecteth upon the *Prince* that ſent him; and ſo that which is done to the *Miniſters* of Chriſt reflecteth upon *Chriſt* whoſe Miniſters they are. *He that receiveth you receiveth me*, Matth. 10. 40. *He that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me*, (ſaith our Saviour to his Apoſtles) *Luk.* 10. 16. And ſo, he that reproacheth them reproacheth God and Chriſt in them: Which let all take heed of.

4. Of his Ordinances.

4. And taking heed of ſpeaking evil of them, do the like as to the ſacred *Ordinances* of God diſpenced by them, of ſpeaking ſleightly or contemptibly of them, of any of them. This we finde brought in as a Charge againſt *Stephen* by thoſe falſe witneſſes that were ſuborned and ſet up againſt him, *Act.* 6. 13. *This man* (ſay they) *ceaſeth not to ſpeak blaſphemous words againſt this holy place* (the *Temple*) *and the Law.* Take heed the like be not juſtly charged upon any of us, that we ſpeak not diſgracefully of any *Goſpel Ordinances.* In particular, of the *Preaching of the Word*; which, though ſerved in in *earthen veſſels* (as *Paul* calls them, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) diſpenſed by weak Inſtruments, yet being conſonant and agreeable to Scripture, is *the Word of God*, and ſo ought to be looked upon, and received with like reverence as if it came from Gods own mouth, and were ſpoken immediately by him. *When ye received the word of God which ye heard from us* (ſaith *Paul* to his *Theſſalonians*) *ye received it not as the word of men, but as the word of God*; 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13. And therefore far be it from us to

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ſpeak contemptibly and diſgracefully of this Ordinance, as too many at this day do.

To theſe I might add ſpeaking evil of the *Works* of God; his works of *Creation*, or *Providence*: Of *Creation*, ſpeaking ſleightly or diſgracefully of any of them, as if *God by Wiſdom* had not made them all; of *Providence*, by quarrelling with his Diſpenſations, as *Job* did in his Affliction, *Job* 3. 20. *Wherefore* (ſaith he) *is light given to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter in ſoul?* and ſo he goes on in a paſſionate Expoſtulation. This alſo take we heed of: If any ſuch thoughts ſhould ariſe in our hearts, quench and quell them there, not ſuffering them to break forth at our lips.

All theſe, beſides divers other, come under this firſt *Head*, of *Blaſpheming of God*, ſpeaking evil of him, or ſpeaking againſt him, whether Immediately and Directly, or Mediately and *Obliquely*, by Reflection.

2. Speaking lightly and vainly of him. Of his Titles. *Grotius* in Exod. 20.

And (Secondly,) Whileſt we take heed of ſpeaking ought againſt him, beware alſo of ſpeaking *lightly* and *vainly* of him, *of taking his Name in vain*, by taking any of his *Titles*, or his *Word*, into our mouthes without juſt cauſe, and ſo ſpeaking of them without due reverence and reſpect. So *Grotius* expounds that *Commandement*, *Non aſſumes, nempe in os tuum. Thou ſhalt not take*, that is, into thy mouth, the *Name* of God, any of thoſe Titles of his whereby he is made known to us, ſo as to uſe them irreverently. Which is done (as before we heard) when men ſhall, in their common and ordinary talk, upon every ſleight

ſleight and trivial occaſion, make uſe of them; and that, as without any juſt cauſe for it, ſo without that due regard which ought to be had to ſo ſacred a Majeſty, who ought not to be mentioned without a holy fear and reverence. This is one thing which *Moſes* intends, *Deut.* 28. 58. where he mindeth the people of fearing the *Name* of their God, *That thou mayeſt* (ſaith he) *fear this glorious and fearfull Name, the Lord thy God.* As fear *God* himſelf, ſo fear his *Name*, ſo as not to take it in vain into their mouthes. And this let all of us be carefull of. In ſpeaking of *God*, having a juſt occaſion to make mention of any of his *Titles* or *Properties*, ſee that we do it with all due reſpect and reverence. As for other *Gods*, falſe Gods, they are not to be named without abhorrence and deteſtation. So the Lord requires it of his people, *Exod.* 23. 13. *Make no mention of the names of other Gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth*, viz. by way of any approbation or liking; for otherwiſe, by way of Hiſtorical report, and of reproof, they ever were, and might be named. In this ſence *David* ſaith that he would *not take up their names into his lips*, Pſal. 16. 4. not do them ſo much honour as to make any mention of them, unleſs it were to ſhew his abhorrence of them: But the *Names* of the true *God*, as Chriſtians may take them into their mouthes, make mention of them, and that any of them, yea, even that *great Name*, which the *Jews* adore above all other, looking upon it as Ἀνεκφώνητον, altogether unutterable, the Name *Jehovah*, which being proper and peculiar unto God, and expreſ-

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ſing his *Eſſence*, they will not have it taken into the mouthes of any, but make uſe of ſome other of his names in ſtead of it; but this is in them no other then a reverend ſuperſtition, or ſuperſtitious reverence, being *ſuprà ſtatutum*, above what God requireth. Gods *Names*, as they are *written*, and may be *read*, ſo they may alſo be *uttered*; and ſo that name as well as any other. But in the mentioning of them, let there ever be (as I ſaid) a due reverence and reſpect obſerved; that vvhileſt vve take them into our *mouthes*, we may alſo take them into our *hearts*, that whileſt we ſpeak of *God*, of *Chriſt*, or of the holy *Spirit*, our hearts may do homage and obeiſance to them, vve being inwardly affected vvith the apprehenſion of the divine Majeſty of thoſe *Perſons* tearmed by thoſe names, ſo as to entertain a high conceit of them, and to be ſubmiſſively carried out towards them. Thus take vve heed of ſinning againſt *God* vvith our *Tongues* by ſpeaking unreverently of him, abuſing his *Names* or *Titles*.

Or yet his *Word*, the *Scripture*, which is called the word of God in a peculiar way, *Bleſſed are they that hear the word of God*, Luk. 11. 28. in as much as it was immediately inſpired by him, coming, as it were, out of his mouth, he ſpeaking in and by the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, who were the Penmen of that holy writ. And being ſo, let all take heed how they take that into their mouthes, ſo as to ſpeak of it, either *Impiouſly*, as they who make uſe of it by way of *Incantation*, as ſome have done who have uſed ſome ſentences in it as *Charms*: Or *Prophanely*, as to uſe it in a *ſcurrilous* Of his Word.

ſcurrilous way, making jeſts of it; Or *Vainly*, to make uſe of that ſacred language upon ſleight and trivial occaſions. All theſe are abuſes of that *Word*, which reflect upon him whoſe word it is. Which let all of us beware of, that we thus ſin not with our *Tongues*.

3. In ſwearing by him.

And the like do we (in the third place) in our *ſwearing* by him. Here alſo take heed that we *take not the name of God in vain*. Not but that *Oaths* in themſelves ever have been, and ſtill are, lawfull and uſeful, being rightly uſed to the ends and purpoſes for which they ſerve; which is (as the Apoſtle tells us) the ending of controverſies and differences, and ſo ſetling of peace and quietneſs: *Heb. 6. 16. For men verily ſwear by the greater, (i. e. by God,) and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all ſtrife.* So great a lover of peace and concord is *God* among men, that he is well pleaſed that they ſhould call in him for a witneſs, and make uſe of his Name for the procuring and eſtabliſhing of it. But herein take we heed of abuſing his Name; whileſt we ſwear by *him*, and *onely* by him: This being an honour which he appropriates to himſelf, *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord, and ſerve him, and ſwear by his Name*, Deut. 6. 13. an honour which may not be given to any creature. This we find clearly prohibited in thoſe two Texts, that of our *Saviour*, Mat. 5. 34, cited, and made uſe of, by St. *James*, Jam. 5. 12. *Above all things, my brethren, ſwear not, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath:* that is, not by any creature. Which as it is improper, and a *vain* thing to do, (the *Crea-*

tures

tures not being capable of knowing the truth of what they are not privy to, or of themſelves of puniſhing the offender for his Perjury,) ſo it is *impious*, a putting of the *Creature* into the room of the *Creator*, making it a *God*. Upon which account let all beware of it. Let not our *Tongues* thus ſin by ſwearing, whether by our ſelves, or by any other Creature whatever, whether *Men*, or *Angels*. Which how light ſoever any may make of it, is no leſs then horrid impiety. This honour give we to *God*, ſwearing onely by him. In the doing whereof, take we heed that we *ſin* not with our *Tongues*. Whether it be

1. By *vain Oathes*, ſwearing upon light and trivial occaſions, where we are not called to it, nor have any juſt cauſe for it. Such was that *Oath* which *Gehazi* vented, when he intended to follow after *Naaman* the *Syrian*, to get ſomewhat from him for that Cure which his Maſter *Eliſha* had wought upon him, but refuſed to receive ought in way of recompence for it; *As the Lord liveth* (ſaith he) *I will run after him, and take ſomewhat of him*, 2 Kin. 5. 20. Such *Oathes* are too common in the mouthes of many, to whom ſwearing is ſo cuſtomary, that they ſcarce know how to ſpeak without it. But let not ſuch *Oathes* fall from our mouthes. This is alſo conceived to be prohibited by our *Saviour* in that Text forecited, *Matth.* 5. 34. *I ſay unto you*, (ſaith he) *ſwear not at all*: that is, vainly and frivolouſly, in your common and ordinary Communication. Μὴ ὅλως, *Ne omninò*, *Not at all*, viz. except you have a lawful calling thereunto; as in caſe of

1. In ſwearing vainly

of witneſs-bearing before ſome Judg, or lawful Magiſtrate, or for the deciding of ſome weighty Controverſie. In ſuch caſes, *Chriſtians* may as lawfully ſwear as ever the *Jews* did. But not ſo where they have no juſt cauſe or warrant for it. Such *Oathes* be we aware of, of thus *taking the name of our God in vain.* Taking heed (as I ſaid) not onely of plain and *down-right Oaths*, but of whatever ſounds like an Oath. Herein obſerving our Saviours Direction and Injunction there following, *Swear not at all* &c. *But let your communication be Yea, yea, Nay, nay*, ver. 37. Your common and ordinary communication, let it be carried on onely with plain and ſimple Affirmations and Negations, by aſſerting and denying what is ſaid or ſpoken. *For* (ſaith he, in the next words) *Whatſoever is more then theſe cometh of evil.* Cuſtomary *ſwearing* by the Name of *God*, or *Proteſtings* before him, which are *petty Oathes*, they are ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, from that *Evil one*, from *Satan*, or from the Corruption in the heart of man, or from an evil habit or cuſtom. And being ſo, take heed of them, abſtaining from them. Take heed of thus ſinning with our *Tongues* by ſwearing lightly and vainly.

2. Swearing raſh'y.

2. And ſo by ſwearing *Raſhly, unadviſedly, ſuddenly, paſſionately*; which is no other but a calling of God for a witneſs to our furious anger. So did King *Saul*, when he could not receive any anſwer from the Lord, and ſo knew not what to do, not knowing where the cauſe of that eſtrangement was, he breaks forth in his Paſſion. *As the Lord liveth* (ſaith he) *which ſaveth Iſ-*

rael,

ruel, though it be Jonathan my ſon, he ſhall ſurely die, 1 Sam. 14. 39. And the like we read of *Jehoram*, 2 King. 6. 31. where in his Paſſion he lets fly the like oath againſt the Prophet *Eliſha*, whom poſſibly he apprehended to have been the cauſe of that ſore famine which was then in *Samaria*. Being enraged againſt him, *Then he ſaid, God do ſo, and more alſo, to me, if the head of Eliſha ſhall ſtand on him this day.* Such paſſionate Oathes, and Imprecations, we meet with many in the Scripture, and we may meet with them every day. But this is a ſin, and a foul one; thus to vent the Paſſion of the *Heart* by the *Tongue*, and ſo to call *God* (as I ſaid) for a witneſs to it. This take we heed of, of ſwearing *Paſſionately*.

3. Much more (in the third place) of ſwearing *falſly*, contrary to our knowledg, or to the intent and meaning of our hearts. This we find charged by the Prophet *Iſaiah* upon the people of the *Jews*, as a ſin too common among them, Iſa. 48. 1. *Hear ye this, O houſe of Jacob*, &c. *which ſwear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Iſrael, but not in truth, nor in righteouſneſs.* And the like by the Prophet *Jeremy*, Jer. 5. 2. *Though they ſay, The Lord liveth, ſurely they ſwear falſly.* Now among all the ſins of the *Tongue*; next to that of direct and immediate blaſpheming of God, there cannot be any more horrid then this, Thus to call in *the God of Truth* to bear witneſs to a lye, and ſo, as much as in us lies, to *make him a Lyar*. A high profanation of Gods ſacred Name. So much we

3. Swearing falſly.

may learn from that Text, *Lev.* 19. 12. where theſe two are put together; *Ye ſhall not ſwear by my name falſly, neither ſhalt thou profane the name of thy God.* To ſwear by the Name of God *vainly* is a profanation of it, much more to ſwear by it *falſly*. Every of us take heed of coming under the guilt of this foul ſin: Which who ſo doth, the Prophet *Zachary* will tell him what he muſt expect, *Zach.* 5. even that *flying roul* ſpoken of, *ver.* 1. wherein there were *Curſes written*, ver. 2. to *come into his houſe*, the Curſe of God to take hold upon him. *I will bring it forth, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and it ſhall enter into the houſe of him that ſweareth falſly by my name, and it ſhall remain in the midſt of his houſe, and conſume it, with the timber thereof, and the ſtones thereof,* *ver.* 4. bring utter ruine upon him and his, without repentance of it. This is one of thoſe *ſins* which God hath threatned to take ſpeedy vengeance for, *Mal.* 3. 5. *I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a ſwift witneſs* (amongſt other ſinners there mentioned) *againſt falſe ſwearers.* O take we heed we be never found in this number; among *Perjur'd perſons*, whom the Apoſtle reckons among the greateſt of ſinners, 1 *Tim.* 1. 10. But being called to ſwear by the Name of God, ſee that we obſerve and follow that direction which the Lord giveth unto his people for the ordering of their oathes, *Jer.* 4. 2. *Thou ſhalt ſwear the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteouſneſs.* Thus take we heed that we ſin not againſt God with our *Tongues*, in ſpeaking *of him*; which is the firſt *Branch* of this *Head.* Briefly of the two other.

2. And

2. And like heed take we in ſpeaking *to him.* Here take we heed that we ſin not againſt him with our *Tongues*, whether it be in our *Prayers*, or *Vows.* 2. In ſpeaking To God.

1. In our *Prayers*; whether *Publick* or *Private.* Here give not vvay to our tongues to ſpeak curſorily, to run out in careleſs and extravagant expreſſions, or to accumulate and heap up a multitude of words, as thinking thereby ever the more to prevail with God. This is that which the *Preacher* dehorteth from, *Eccl.*5.2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* Verboſity and loquacity, as it is not pleaſing to men, ſo much leſs to God. In ſpeaking to him let our words be choice and few, not thinking that God meaſures our Prayers by the length of them. Such was the conceit of the *Heathen*, whom our Saviour warns his *Diſciples* not to propound as a pattern for their imitation, Matth.6.7. *When ye pray, uſe not vain repetitions, as the Heathen do, for they think that they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking.* So thought *Baals Prieſts*, of whom the ſtory tells us, how that *they called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, ſaying, O Baal hear us*, 1 King. 18.26. ſo repeating the ſame words over and over. Whereupon the Prophet *Eliah*, who was a hearer of them, jeereth them with that ſarcaſtical and biting ſcoff, in the words following; where he bids them, *Cry aloud, for he is a God,* (ſaith he) *either he is talking, or he is purſuing*, &c. 1. In our Prayers.

ſome ways or other ſo taken up that he cannot hear or anſwer you. And ſuch vvas the mode of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, for which our Saviour pronounceth a *woe* againſt them, *Matth.*23.14. *Woe unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows houſes, and for a pretence make long Prayers.* This they did, thinking thereby to gain the repute of pious and devout perſons, that ſo they might the more readily be be truſted with the Eſtates of Widows and Orphanes, whom they intended to defraud of them. Thus did they wrong and abuſe both *God* and *man*. Let not the like be charged upon any of us.

Long Prayers, with Repetitions, in ſome caſes allowed.

Not but that Chriſtians, upon occaſion, may make *long Prayers*, and alſo make uſe of *Repetitions* in Prayer. For both theſe we have our *Saviours* own example to warrant them. As for *long Prayer*, we find how he *went out into a Mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God*, *Luk.* 6. 12. And for *Repetitions*, we find how in his *Agony in the Garden* he went away from his Diſciples, *and prayed the third time, ſaying the ſame words*, Matth. 26. 44. So as long Prayers, upon weighty occaſions, are not to be condemned. Nor yet ſuch *Repetitions* as are uſefull to excite and ſtir up affection; in which way we find *Daniel* making uſe of them, *Dan.*9.16, 18, 19. But *vain* and *needleſs* ones. Such are the *Repetitions* which our Saviour there prohibits in that Text, *Matth.* 6.7. *Battologies*, μὴ βαττολογήσητε (ſaith the Original) a word taken from *Battus* a Poet, who was noted and branded for an egregious babler, for uſing many words to little purpoſe,

Montibus, inquit, erant, & erant ſub montibus illis. Ovid.

purpoſe, and inculcating them again and again. Both which are under that word (then commonly uſed) there forbidden. *Uſe not vain Repetitions*, nor *multiply needleſs words*; Two things which the *Romiſh Liturgies* are notoriouſly guilty of, as *Caſaubon* and others obſerve. This take we heed of in our *Prayers*, that we thus ſin not with our *Tongues*; remembring that advice of the *Preacher*. In ſpeaking unto God, let our *words be adviſed, conſiderate, and few*; ſuch as may ſuit with our inward conceptions, and with the Majeſty of that great God to whom we ſpeak.

Vide Caſaubon: Exercit. 14. *ad Annales Baronij.*

2. And as in our Prayers, ſo in our *Vows*. Here alſo we ſpeak *unto God*: which whilſt we do, take heed of *ſinning with our Tongues*, whether by

2. In our Vows.

1. Making *unlawful Vows*: ſuch as are either unlawful in *themſelves*, being ſuch as cannot be performed without ſin, or unlawfull *as to us*, being ſuch as it is not in our power to perform them, or ſuch as we have no purpoſe to perform, our hearts croſſing our Tongues. Or

1. Making unlawful Vows.

2. By ſudden, raſh, *unadviſed Vows*. Here again remember that of the *Preacher*; *Not being haſty to utter a thing before God*, but let our *words be few*, that is, our *Vows*, which the *Preacher* is conceived there to have a ſpecial eye at. Do not we make this a common and ordinary work, as it is with ſome, who upon every trivial occaſion make uſe of thoſe words, *I vow to God*. But herein be we *ſerious*: what we thus utter before God, and ſpeak unto him, let it not be the meer work of our *tongues*, but let it

2. Raſh and unadviſed.

come from our *hearts*: whileſt we ſwear in truth, let us not dare to lie in our *vows*, knowing that *God will not be mocked*. And being ſerious, be we alſo adviſed and deliberate, not vowing *raſhly*, though it be out of a good intention. Such was *Jephtha*'s Vow before-mentioned, which he made unto God, when he was to go forth againſt the *Ammonites*, Judg. 11. 30. *Jephtha vowed a vow unto the Lord, and ſaid, If thou ſhalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, then it ſhall be, that whatſoever cometh forth of the doors of my houſe to meet me, when I return in peace, it ſhall be the Lords, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.* Herein, no queſtion, *Jephtha* had a pious intention of expreſſing his gratitude to his God; but yet his Vow was raſh and inconſiderate, in as much as he knew not what it was that might firſt come forth to meet him, which poſſibly might have been a Horſe, or a Dog, and ſo not fit for ſacrifice, to be offered up for a burnt offering, no more then his *Daughter* was. Such Vows take we heed of. Let our *Vows* be few and wiſe; knowing, that if the word be gone forth of our lips, it engageth us to the performance of what we have ſpoken, if lawfull and poſſible, though to our ſelves never ſo prejudicial. *That which is gone out of thy lips thou ſhalt keep and perform*, Deut. 26. 23. Thus take we heed of ſinning with our Tongues in ſpeaking *to God*.

3. In ſpeaking from God; the work of his Miniſters.

And ſo (in the third place) in ſpeaking *from him*; which is more peculiarly the Work of *Gods Miniſters*, who are called his *mouth*. *If*

thou

thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou ſhalt be as my mouth (ſaith the Lord to the Prophet *Jeremy*) Jer. 15. 9. It being their office to ſpeak from him; upon which account they are called the *Ambaſſadours of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. And being ſo, let them take heed to their *Tongues* in a ſpecial manner, that in their Miniſtration they ſin not with them, by ſpeaking any thing but what God hath put into their mouthes. This was *Pauls* care, as he tells his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 11. 23. *That which I have received of the Lord I have delivered unto you.* *Ambaſſadours* may not ſpeak ought, but what they have received Commiſſion from their Maſters ſo to do. And whileſt they ſpeak nothing but the minde of God, let them ſo ſpeak as becometh the Word of the great God to be ſpoken. That is St. *Peters* charge, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God.* This is the work and duty of Gods Miniſters: God having committed his *Oracles* unto them, they are to ſpeak them as his *Oracles*, with all reverence, gravity, humility, and fidelity. And as not ſpeaking any thing to others but what God hath ſpoken to them in and by his Word, ſo not *concealing*, not keeping back any thing that he would have them to ſpeak. *I have kept nothing back* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *that was profitable to you*, Act. 20. 20. But ſpeaking with all freedom and boldneſs, as the *Apoſtles* are ſaid to have done, *Act.* 4. 31. *They ſpake the Word of the Lord with great boldneſs*; not forbearing to reprove ſin in whomſoever it is to be found. Thus let them beware, that in the diſcharge of their

Miniſterial Function, (the chief part whereof, if St. *Paul* may be believed, is the Preaching of the Word,) they do not ſin with their Tongues; whether by ſpeaking what, or how they ought not to ſpeak; or yet by being ſilent when they ſhould ſpeak. But this I ſhall not any longer inſiſt upon. I have now done with the firſt of theſe three *Heads* to which the ſins of the *Tongue* may be reduced; which is in reference to *God*, in ſpeaking *of* him, *to* him, or *from* him: Paſs we now to the ſecond,

II. *Head.* Our Neighbours, where take heed of ſinning

Which relates to our *Neighbour*; others who, being of the ſame kind and nature, the ſame fleſh and blood with our ſelves, ſons of *Adam* as we are, where-ever they have their abode, are, in Scripture-language, called our *Neighbour*; *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*, Matth. 22. 39. Now here take we heed that we *ſin not with our Tongues*, by offending againſt them, whether in ſpeaking *Of* them, *To* them, *From* them, *Before* them. To theſe four I ſhall reduce the ſins of the *Tongue* which come under this Head.

I. In ſpeaking *Of* them.

I. In ſpeaking of them. Where take we heed,

1. Of ſpeaking *againſt* them, ſpeaking *Evil* of them, to their hurt and prejudice; of *Blaſpheming* them. This is one thing which *Paul* willeth *Titus* to put the people in minde of, *Tit.* 3 2. *To ſpeak evil of no man.* Μηδένα βλασφημεῖν, to *blaſpheme no man*, not to hurt their good Names, (which is the proper ſignification of the word *Blaſpheming*.) This be we ware of: A *good Name* being one of a mans choiceſt Jewels, a thing

1. Speaking Evil of them. βλασφημεῖν, q. βλάπτειν τῇ φήμῃ.

thing of great value; (ſo *Solomon* looked upon it, who, ſpeaking of it, ſaith, *A good name is rather to be choſen then great Riches*, Prov. 22. 1. And again, *Eccleſ.* 7. 1. *A good Name is better then precious Oyntment*; Aromatical Oyntments, having a fragrant ſmell, were ever of high eſteem among the Jews; and ſo is a good Name among men; *Thy name is as oyntment poured forth*, (ſaith the *Spouſe*, the Church, expreſſing her love to *Chriſt*) Cant. 1. 3.) and being ſo, take heed how we wrong men in it, by defaming of them. Thus was *Paul blaſphemed*, as he ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. *Being defamed*, βλασφημούμενοι, (ſaith the Original) being *Blaſphemed*, evil ſpoken of by his Adverſaries. This take we heed of, of ſpeaking againſt others, ſpeaking evil of them wrongfully, or without juſt cauſe; of thus ſmiting them with our *Tongues*. This was the deſign of *Jeremy*'s malicious enemies againſt him; *Come* (ſay they) *and let us ſmite him with the Tongue*, Jer. 18. 18. And ſo is it with many others; when they cannot ſtretch forth their hands againſt thoſe whom they bear an ill will to, they will ſmite them with their *Tongues*, ſpeak evil of them. But this be we ware of: of doing this, whether *before their Faces*, or *behinde their Backs*.

1. *Before their faces*, railing on them, and reviling them, aſſaulting them with opprobrious and diſgraceful language. Thus did churliſh *Nabal* uſe *Davids meſſengers*, whom he ſent to him out of the Wilderneſs to ſalute him; *he railed on them*, (as one of his ſervants told his Wife *Abigail*,) 1 Sam. 25. 14. And thus was *David* himſelf

1. Before their faces, Railing on them.

ſelf uſed by that *dead dog*, *Shimei*, (as *Abiſhai* calls him, 2 *Sam.* 16. 9.) who following *David* barked at him, venting his ſpleen, expreſſing his rage and malice againſt him by opprobrious ſpeeches; *He came forth, and curſed ſtill as he came: And thus ſaid* Shimei *when he curſed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of* Belial, *verſ.* 5, 7. And ſuch language our Saviour met with from his malicious Enemies, the *Jews*; as in his life, ſo at his death. Going to be crucified they *ſpat* upon him; and when he was upon the *Croſs*, they reviled him, railed on him. So did not onely the *Thieves*, which were crucified with him, of whom St. *Mark* ſaith, *And they that were crucified with him reviled him*, Mat. 15.32. (which is properly to be underſtood onely of one of them, as St. *Luke* reſtrains it, *Luk.* 23. 39. *One of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him*;) but alſo others, who were ſpectators of that diſmal Tragedy. *They that paſſed by reviled him*, Matth. 27.39. Ἐβλασφήμουν, *blaſphemed him*; *Railed on him, wagging their heads*, *Mark* 15. 29. And the like uſe have the Saints of God uſually met with, and muſt make account to meet with from their malicious Enemies. *Dogs* will be barking at *ſtrangers*, and ſo will wicked and ungodly men at ſuch as will not walk with them in their ungodly ways. But let the ſervants of Chriſt take heed of imitating them herein, of doing the like to any others, or yet to them, however provoked by them: Let them not anſwer them in their language, repaying them in their own coyn, returning reviling for reviling. This would not

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our bleſſed *Saviour* do, of whom St. *Peter* tells us, that *when he was reviled he reviled not again*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. Nor yet his ſervant *Paul*, who tells his *Corinthians* how he bare ſuch affronts and indignities which he met with from foul mouthes; *Being reviled* (ſaith he) *we bleſs*, 1 Cor. 4. 12. Such language becomes the mouth of a Chriſtian, *Bleſſing*; *Bleſs them that curſe you*, (ſo our Saviour teacheth his Diſciples) *Matth.* 5. 44. But as for reviling and railing, let them keep themſelves from it; *Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but, contrariwiſe, bleſſing.* 1 Pet. 3. 9. Taking notice of what the Apoſtle tells them, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. that *Revilers* (or *Railers*) *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*

Upbraiding them.

And taking heed of ſuch aſſaults by ſuch opprobrious language, ſo alſo by unjuſt or uncharitable *Exprobations*, by upbraiding them. Not that all *upbraiding* of a mans Neighbour is unlawfull: St. *Mark* tells us how our *Saviour*, appearing to his Apoſtles, after his Reſurrection, *upbraided them with their unbelief and hardneſs of heart*, Mar. 16. 14. And St. *Paul* tells his *Galatians* how he dealt with *Peter*, Gal. 2. 11. finding him guilty of diſſimulation, and of complying with the *Jews*, to the ſcandal of the *Gentiles*: *When he was come to* Antioch (ſaith he) *I withſtood him to the face*, reproving of him boldly and openly; which he did not onely in the outward appearance (as ſome interpret that phraſe, κατ' πρόσωπον,) but ſeriouſly, as may be gathered from the words following, where *Paul* giveth a Reaſon for his ſo doing, *Becauſe* (ſaith he) *he*

Upbraiding in ſome caſes lawfull.

was

was to be blamed. And the like Chriſtians may do to their Brethren, ſo it be done upon good ground, and in a charitable way, for their Reformation; nay, in ſuch a way, having a fit occaſion for it, they ought to do it. So runs the *Law*, Lev. 19. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* But to do this either *unjuſtly*, or *uncharitably*, beware of it: Of doing it *unjuſtly*, by charging ſome crime upon them which they are not guilty of; or *uncharitably*, upbraiding them with their true faults in a reproachful manner, ſpecially being ſuch as they have manifeſted their repentance for. Both theſe are to be looked upon as *revilings*; which take heed we be not found guilty of. Thus take heed of *blaſphemings* our neighbours, ſpeaking evil of them *before their faces.*

2. Much more (in the ſecond place) of doing it *behind their Backs*, which is more dangerous then the former. Such thruſts as are made at a mans face he may put them by, defending himſelf againſt them, but not ſo when his enemy cometh behind him. And ſo is it with ſuch *defamations* as are declared in the preſence of the party reproached, he may (if innocent,) defend himſelf againſt them, but not ſo againſt what is ſpoken in his abſence, behind his back, which he taketh no notice of. This be we aware of, that we do not thus ſin with our Tongues, by doing this

2. Behind their Backs

Whether openly or ſecretly.

Whether *openly* or *ſecretly*. To theſe two heads the Apoſtles reduceth all ſuch *Obtreſtati-*

ons,

ons, Rom. 1. 30. where reckoning up ſome of the chief ſins of the *Gentiles*, which were rife among them in thoſe times, among other he names theſe two, putting them together, *Whiſperers*, *Backbiters*. And again, 2 *Cor.* 12. 20. ſpeaking of the many foul diſorders which he feared were to be found in the Church of *Corinth*, among the reſt he reckons up theſe for two of them; *Backbitings*, *Whiſperings*, Καταλαλιαὶ, Ψιθυεισμοὶ; which Expoſitors generally diſtinguiſh, as denoting two different crimes; by the former, underſtanding a more *open defamation* before others promiſcuouſly, tending to the diſgrace of the perſon ſpoken of; by the latter, a more *ſecret obtrectation*, or *detractation*, whiſpered into the ears of ſome that were in friendſhip with him, tending to divide and make ſome breach betwixt them. Each a great evil, the Tongue hereby wounding three at once. The Perſon *ſpoken of*, the *Hearer*, and the *Speaker*. The perſon ſpoken of, wounding his reputation; The *Hearers*, ſtirring up in them uncharitable thoughts concerning their neighbours; The *Speaker*, who thereby woundeth his own ſoul. And being ſo, be we ware of both.

1. Of doing this *Openly*, of *Backbiting* our neighbours, thus defaming them behinde their backs, ſpeaking evil of them before others promiſcuouſly. An evil very common among wicked and prophane perſons, who having malicious ſpirits, their Tongues are ſet on fire of hell, ſo as they are ready to vent their rancour and malice againſt thoſe whom they bear ill will to, by ſpeaking

1. Openly, Backbiting them.

ſpeaking all the evil they can againſt them. Such was the practice of *Davids* enemies againſt him, of which we may hear him often complaining, as *Pſal.*57.4. *My ſoul* (ſaith he, complaining unto God) *is among Lyons, I lie even among them that are ſet on fire, even the ſons of men whoſe teeth are ſpears and arrows, and their tongue a ſharp ſword.* So again, *Pſal.* 64. 3. ſpeaking of thoſe his malicious enemies, *Who whet their tongue like a ſword,* (ſaith he) *and bend their bows to ſhoot their arrows, even bitter words; That they may ſhoot in ſecret at the perfect, ſuddenly do they ſhoot at him, and fear not.* The like we find again, *Pſal.*59.6. *They make a noiſe like a dog, and go round about the City.* They were continually barking at him, reviling and reproaching him, ſeeking and endeavouring (as it were) to tear him in pieces with their teeth, as he ſaith of them, *Pſal* 35.15,16. *The abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me, and I knew it not, they did tear me, and ceaſed not; with hypocritical mockers in feaſts, they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth.* Thus did they make him a common Table-talk, rayling upon him, and reviling him; *Sharpening their tongues againſt him,* (as he ſaith) Pſal.140. 3. *Gaping upon him with their mouthes,* (as we have it) *Pſal.*22.13. ſeeking even to devour and ſwallow him up, both his good name, and his life alſo. Such an enemy was *Doeg* unto him, of whom he ſaith, *Pſal.* 52.4. *Thou loveſt all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue.* And ſuch were many others, of whom he ſaith, *Pſal.* 5. 9. (a Text made uſe of by the Apoſtle, and by him applied

applied to wicked and ungodly perſons, *Rom.* 3. 13.) *Their throat is an open ſepulchre.* The *Sepulchre*, being open, is ready to ſwallow up dead Carcaſſes which are caſt into it; and ſo were their mouthes opened againſt him, ſeeking by their malicious words to ſwallow up his reputation. And as it was with *David*, ſo hath it been with other of the ſervants of God, who have in like manner ſuffered as he did, being reproached and reviled by their malicious enemies. So were the people of *Iſrael* by their enemies, the *Moabites*, and *Ammonites*, which the Lord ſaith he took notice of, *Zeph.* 2. 8. *I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people.* And the like true *Iſraelites* often meet with. It was *Pauls* lot, (as we heard) he was *blaſphemed.* And St. *John* tells his well-beloved *Gaius* how he was uſed by *Diotrephes*, 3 Joh. 10. *Who prated againſt him with malicious words.* Λόγοις πονηροῖς φλυαρῶν, vapouring againſt him with wicked words, ſeeking to diſgrace and diſparage his *Perſon*, and ſo to hinder the ſucceſs of his *Miniſtery.* Such is the common practice of wicked and malicious ſpirits, whoſe tongues are ready thus to vent the poyſon and malice which is in their hearts: Being therein like *Serpents*, to which *David* compares thoſe his enemies before ſpoken of, *Pſal.* 140. 3. *They have ſharpened their tongues like a Serpent, Adders poyſon is under their lips.* The *Serpent* by ſtinging diffuſeth that poyſon which lay hid under the *tongue* of it, the moſt venomous whereof is that of the *Adder*, which

which hath been accounted ἀνίατον, deadly and incurable. And so doth the *Backbiter*, his *tongue being full of deadly poyson*, (as St. *James* saith, *Jam.* 3.8.) in speaking of such as he hateth, he venteth it by speaking evil of those who deserve it not, so, as much as in him lieth, wounding them mortally.

Backbiting a great and dangerous evil.

But this let all the servants of Christ beware of, of having their tongues infected with this poyson; of thus *backbiting* their neighbours, speaking evil of any others without just cause and warrant so to do. This is one of those evils which St. *Peter* requires all Christians to lay aside, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1. *wherefore laying aside malice, and envies, and evil speakings.* Πάσας καταλαλιάς, (saith the Original) *Omnes obtrectationes*, all kinds of *Backbitings*. And the like charge we find given by St. *James*, *Jam.* 4. 11. *Speak not evil one of another, Brethren*; Μὴ καταλαλεῖτε, Do not *backbite* one another. To which he subjoyns a weighty Argument, or *Reason*, to enforce the Exhortation; *He that speaketh evil of his Brother speaketh evil of the Law*; in as much as he in so doing acteth directly contrary to the Law, which expressly forbiddeth all such *Backbiting*. This let all of us keep our selves from. It is one of the *Characters* which the *Psalmist* giveth of a *Citizen of Zion*, a true member of the Church, one who having communion with God here, shall dwell with him for ever, *Psal.* 15.3. *He is one that backbiteth not with his Tongue.* See we that every of us herein approve our selves to be of this number; so taking heed to our

Tongues,

Tongues, that we do not thus *ſin* with them, thus *Blaſpheming* our neighbours; ſpeaking evil of them. Whether

1. In a *General* way, by branding them with opprobrious names and Titles, ſuch as they deſerve not; or however ſuch as do not become our mouthes to utter. A thing too common every where; The more to be taken heed of by all who would give a good account of their words to God and man.

1. In a general way, branding them with opprobrious names.

2. In a *Particular* way, by charging ſome evil upon them. Whether *wrongfully*, or *unchariably*.

2. In a Particular way, charging evils upon them; whether

1. *Wrongfully*, and *falſly*, *ſlandering* them. A foul and odious ſin. No one ſin makes a man ſo like the *Devil*, as this. From hence hath he that name of his whereby he is moſt commonly known, Διάβολος, *The Devil*. *That old Serpent called the Devil*, Rev. 12. 9. which properly ſignifieth *Calumniator*, a *Slanderer*: Which is given to him κατ' ἐξοχὴν, in a peculiar way, by way of Eminency, in as much as he is *Artifex calumniandi*, the chief crafts-maſter in this wicked art. And from him it is derived to others, ſuch as herein imitate him, and are like unto him, who are called by the ſame name, Διάβολοι, *Devils*. So we find them thrice in three of *Pauls* Epiſtles; As, 1 *Tim.* 3. 11. where ſpeaking of *Deacons wives*, and ſhewing what ones they ſhould be, among other qualifications he requires this, that they be no *ſlanderers*. Μὴ διάβολοι, No *Devils*. And ſo again, 2 *Tim.* 3. 3. where foretelling what ſins ſhould be epidemical and rife in the latter

1. Wrongfully.

times, among other he reckons up this for one, *Men ſhall be falſe accuſers.* And again, *Tit.*2.3. vvhere he requires it in a ſpecial manner of *aged Women*, that they be *no falſe accuſers*; in both vvhich Texts the vvord is the ſame vvith that in the former, Διάβολοι, *Slanderers, Devils.* Such is this practice, truly *Diabolical.* And being ſo, be vve vvare of being in any kind found guilty of it; As,

1. By *bringing in a falſe Accuſation* againſt our neighbours. This *Zacheus* the *Publicane*, being converted, looked upon as a foul crime, and therefore maketh promiſe of an ample reſtitution to ſuch as he had hereby wronged, *Luk.*19. 8. *If I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation, I reſtore him four-fold.* And ſo it is, being a truly *Deviliſh practice.* Upon this account is he called by that name Διάβολος, *Devil*; as vve find the reaſon of it rendred, *Rev.* 12.10. in as much as he is *The accuſer of the Brethren, which accuſeth them before God, day and night.* Take heed of being herein like unto him, of being falſe accuſers of our brethren, giving in falſe informations againſt them. Such *Devils*, ſuch *Slanderers*, vve find many taken notice of in Scripture. Such a one vvas *Potiphars wife*, vvho accuſed her ſervant *Joſeph*, not onely before his fellow-ſervants, but to his *Maſter*, that he attempted to commit a rape upon her, for vvhich he vvas committed to Priſon; of vvhich vve have the ſtory, *Gen.*39.14,17. And ſuch a one vvas *Doeg*, vvho maliciouſly and falſly accuſed *David* and *Ahimelech* unto King *Saul* for conſpiring

1. Bringing falſe Accuſations againſt them.

ſpiring againſt him, 1 *Sam.* 22.9,13. And ſuch was *Ziba*, who ſlandered his Maſters ſon, *Mephiboſheth*, bringing a falſe report concerning him unto King *David*, as if he had been no friend of his, but aſpired to the Sovereignty, 2 *Sam.* 16.3. Of which *Mephiboſheth* afterwards coming into *Davids* preſence complains, ſaying, *He hath ſlandered thy ſervant unto my Lord the King*, 2 Sam. 19.27. Such ſlanderous tongues the ſervants of God have frequently met with, and felt of. So did *David*, who complains that his malicious enemies had *Caſt iniquity upon him*, Pſal. 55 3. So did the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who ſetteth forth how his enemies had deſigned to deal with him, *Jer.* 18.18. *Then ſaid they, come, let us deviſe deviſes againſt Jeremiah; come and let us ſmite him with the tongue*; by giving in ſome falſe information, which might incenſe the higher powers againſt him. So did our bleſſed *Saviour*, againſt whom came in thoſe two *falſe witneſſes*, accuſing him to the *Councel*, Matth. 26.61. *This fellow ſaid* (ſay they) *I am able to deſtroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days.* And the like did the *Proto-martyr Stephen*, againſt whom thoſe ſuborned witneſſes brought in that foul charge, *Act.* 6.11. *We have heard him ſpeak blaſphemous words againſt Moſes, and againſt God.* And ſo *Paul* and *Silas*, who were accuſed by the *Maſters* of that *Pythoniſs*, the *Damoſel poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of divination*, which they made great gain of, complaining to the Magiſtrates, how that they *being Jews did exceedingly trouble their City*, Act. 16. 20. And ſo again Cap. 18. 13.

The *Jews* informed againſt *Paul* before the Judgment ſeat, ſaying, *This fellow perſwadeth men to worſhip God contrary to the Law.* To theſe (if need were) I might add many more. Such *Slanderers* there have ever been not a few in all times and places, ſuch as have been ready thus falſly to accuſe their Brethren. But take we heed that we be not found in this number: This being a thing directly contrary to the *Law*, where we have an expreſs command againſt it, the Ninth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour.* And whileſt it is, or may be very prejudicial and hurtful to our *neighbour*, (which the *Wiſeman* tells us, *Prov.*25.18.) *A man that beareth falſe witneſs againſt his neighbour is a maule, and a ſword, and a ſharp arrow*; wounding him, not onely in his good name, but (it may be) in his eſtate, liberty, life,) it will in the end be no leſs to our ſelves, who, whatever we have from men, muſt expect from God a juſt requital. So *David* telleth his enemies, who had ſlandered him as they had done, *I have heard the ſlander of many*, (ſaith he) *Pſal.*31.13. and in ſpecial, *Doeg*, Pſal.120.3,4. *What ſhall be given unto thee*, (ſaith he) *or what ſhall be done unto thee, thou falſe tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.* This is that which ſuch falſe accuſers muſt expect for their reward. Whileſt they *ſhoot arrows* at others, God will ſhoot arrows at them, and that *ſharp arrows*; whileſt they throw fire-balls at others, they ſhall fall upon their own heads, even *coals of Juniper*, which are hot and durable, denoting ſome

ſharp

ſharp and laſting judgments. Hereof we have many inſtances in Scripture. That of *Haman* is well known; who accuſing the people of the *Jews* unto King *Ahaſuerus* of diſobedience to his Laws, that ſo he might be revenged upon *Mordecai*, he ſuffered the ſame puniſhment that he had deſigned for him, being *hanged upon the ſame Gallows that he had prepared for him*, Eſth. 7. 10. And the like did *Daniels* accuſers meet with; who were caſt into the ſame *Lyons Den, they, their children, and wives*, which *Daniel* had been, by their means, caſt into, but was now taken forth of; where they were torn in pieces, whileſt *Daniel* was not hurt, (as we have the ſtory) *Dan. 6.* 23, 24. Which Examples let them be a warning to all that hear of them, for ever to take heed of being, in the leaſt degree, guilty in this kinde, of thus *ſinning with their tongues*, by giving in *falſe informations*, bearing falſe witneſs againſt their neighbours.

2. And ſo (ſecondly) of *defaming* them, bringing an evil report upon them: And that, whether by *Raiſing*, or *Spreading* it. 2. Bringing an evil Report upon them, whether

1. By *Raiſing it*. Such uſe do ſome make of their Tongues, to mint and forge, to invent and utter Lies for the ſlandering of their Brethren. This is one thing which we finde charged upon the wicked and ungodly man, as one of his fouleſt crimes, *Pſal.* 50. 19, 20. *Thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit: Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy brother, thou ſlandereſt thine own mothers ſon.* Such is the diſpoſition of ſome, that having inured their Tongues to 1. Raiſing it,

ſpeak evil, they can hardly ſpeak well of any; no, though never ſo nearly related to them. In all companies they will be ſpeaking evil of ſome or other; and oft-times deviſing ſomewhat againſt them. Such a one was *Doeg* the *Edomite*, whom *David* ſets forth in his colours, *Pſal.* 52. 2. *Thy tongue deviſeth miſchiefs, like a ſharp razour, working deceitfully. Thou loveſt evil more then good, and lying rather then to ſpeak righteouſneſs; thou loveſt all devouring words.* Thus did he make uſe of his tongue againſt *David*. And ſo do many make uſe of theirs againſt their Neighbours; ſpecially ſuch as they either hate as their enemies, or envy as their betters; Now they care not what evil they ſay of them, be it never ſo falſe. A thing which, the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, is even connatural to wicked and ungodly men, *Pſal.* 58. 3. *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray as ſoon as they be born, ſpeaking lies; Their poyſon is like the poyſon of a Serpent.* They are inured hereunto, even from their cradles, to mint and vent lies; which they are ready to utter upon any occaſion, againſt whomſoever it be, not caring how they wound the reputation of any. A wicked practice, which who ſo are guilty of, they thereby ſhew whoſe children they are. *Ye are of your father the Devil*, (ſaith our Saviour to the Jews,) *for he is a Liar, and the father of it.* Joh. 8. 44. So he is of all kinde of lying, and ſpecially of this, which is thus uſed in ſlandering of others: which let it be far from every of us. *He that will love life, and ſee good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they ſpeak no guile,* 1. Pet. 3. 10.

2. And

2. And whileſt we take heed of raiſing a falſe report, take heed alſo of *ſpreading* it; of blowing up, or ſcattering abroad that coal which another hath kindled. This is the *Tale-bearers* work, thus to walk about with ſlanders. A thing which the Prophet *Jeremy* complaineth of as a great and common evil among the *Jews* in his time, *Jer.* 6. 28. *They are all grievous revolters, walking with ſlanders.* And again, *Cap.* 9. *v.* 4. *Every brother will walk with ſlanders*; carrying tales to and fro, ſpreading abroad falſe reports. A wicked practice: which we have expreſly inhibited, *Lev.* 19. 16. *Thou ſhalt not go up and down as a talebearer among the people.* Take heed that we be not found in the number of theſe: Whom we may not unfitly call, the *Devils Pedlars*, who carry about his wares; A baſe office! So looking upon it, decline and avoid it. Let not our tongues be guilty of thus uttering a ſlander; which who ſo doth, the wiſeſt of men will call him a fool for his pains, *Prov.* 10. 18. *He that uttereth a ſlander is a fool.* An ill employment for the Tongue. Let not any of us give way to it, to ſuffer our Tongues to run out in making ſuch reports of what is falſe: of doing it, whether *Knowingly*, or *Raſhly*.

2. Spreading is whether

1. *Knowingly* and *purpoſely*. This is one thing which the Prophet *Jeremy* complaineth of, *Jer.* 20. 10. where ſpeaking of the ſlanderous reports which were by his malicious Enemies ſpread abroad of him, *I heard* (ſaith he) *the defaming of many*; *Report* (*ſay they*) *and we will report it.* Though they knew it to be falſe, yet they would

1. Knowingly.

ſpread it abroad for the defaming or endangering of him. Such ſlanderers there are not a few, who, ſo long as they have but a *Patron* to father their lies upon, they will carry them abroad; though their hearts tell them that what their tongues utter is not true. A foul and horrid ſin! which however haply it may, in ſome caſes, finde ſome excuſe before *Men*, yet not ſo before *God*; with whom the *Tale-bearer* ſpreading falſe reports, and doing it knowingly, is all one with him that firſt raiſed it.

2. Raſhly. 2. Of doing it *Raſhly*. A thing too common; and that not onely among *malicious ſpirits*, which are willing to believe every report which may tend to the defaming of ſuch as they bear an ill will to, and ſo to make uſe of it to that end by ſpeaking of it where-ever they come; but even among others, who, being too credulous, do often believe, and believing report what they hear, to the diſcredit and diſparagement of their Brethren, whileſt there is no truth in what they ſay. But this be we ware of: Judging charitably of our neighbours, be not haſty to believe evil reports concerning them, which we have no ſure evidence for, much leſs to ſpread them; In the doing whereof we ſhall wrong both them and our ſelves. A thing which I heartily wiſh it were more ſeriouſly thought of, and conſcionably practiſed by all thoſe who make a profeſſion of Religion. It is one of the Characters which *David* giveth of a *Citizen of Sion*, Pſal. 15. 3. *He taketh not up a reproach againſt his neighbour*. *Non accipit*, he *receiveth not* (as our Margin readeth it;) not taking

taking it up into his *heart*, ſo as to *believe* it, much leſs into his *mouth*, ſo as to *utter* it. This let not us do; but loving our neighbour as our ſelves, do we to him as we would be done to by him, and others. Being tender of his good name as of our own, ſeek by all juſt ways and means to preſerve it. Not thus *Backbiting* them, ſpeaking evil of them *openly*.

2. Nor yet *ſecretly*, as *whiſperers*. This the Apoſtle reckons up among the foul ſins of the *Heathen*, *Rom.* 1. 29. Ψιθυριςὰς, *Suſurratores*, *Whiſperers*. Such are *privy Tale-bearers*, who do that ſecretly which the Backbiter doth openly; whiſpering into the ears of others ſome evil concerning their neighbour. Thus dealt *Davids* enemies by him. *All that hate me* (ſaith he) *whiſper together againſt me, againſt me do they deviſe my hurt*; *An evil diſeaſe* (ſay they) *cleaveth unto him*, &c. Pſal. 41. 7. 8. Thus they gave it out ſecretly that God was become his mortal enemy, inflicting ſome great judgment upon him for ſome foul ſin committed by him: As thoſe *Barbarians* dealt with *Paul*, who *when they ſaw that venemous beaſt*, the Viper, *hang on his hand, they ſaid among themſelves, No doubt this man is a murtherer*, Act. 28. 4. Such *whiſpering* be we ware of; of thus *ſlandering* our neighbours *privily*. Such *ſlanderers David* would not endure, as he ſaith, *Pſal.* 101. 5. *Whoſo ſlandereth his neighbour privily, him will I cut off*; not endure him in his family.

2. Speaking evil of them ſecretly. Whiſpering.

And whileſt we take heed of thus ſlandering them by whiſpering what is not true, take heed alſo

alſo of *prejudicing* them by making a ſecret report of what, though true, may be of ill conſequence to the perſon ſpoken of, and the perſon ſpoken to, tending to breed ſome jealouſie and evil ſuſpicion in the one againſt the other, and ſo to divide them in their affections who were before united. This is the *whiſperers* work, as the *Wiſeman* tells us, *Prov.* 16. 28. *A whiſperer ſeparateth between chief friends.* An ill office, then which a man cannot do a worſe to his neighbour. Let not our *Tongues* be employed in it. It is the duty of Chriſtians to be *Peace-makers*, *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers*, Matth. 5. 9. To endeavour to reconcile ſuch as are at variance. As to reconcile *God* to *men*, and *men* to *God*, which Chriſt hath done *meritoriouſly*: *You that were ſometimes alienated, and enemies in your mindes by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled*, Col. 1. 21. *Having made peace through the blood of his Croſs*, (as the verſe foregoing hath it.) And the *Miniſters* of Chriſt are to do *Inſtrumentally*, having *the miniſtery of reconciliation committed to them*, to that end, 2 Cor. 5. 18. So *Men* to *Men*. And being reconciled to preſerve peace and amity betwixt them. To divide them, then, and ſet them at variance, is an evil work. Seeds of diſſention are ſome of the *Devils tares*. Let not us be his ſeeds-men, employing our tongues in ſowing them. This is one of thoſe *ſeven things* which the *Wiſeman* tells us are an *abomination unto God*, *Him that ſoweth diſcord among brethren*, *Prov.* 6. 19. Take we heed that we uſe not our *Tongues* as *ſteels* or *flints* to ſtrike this fire, or our

mouthes

mouthes as *bellows* to blow it up, as inſtruments in breeding or increaſing of diviſions betwixt neighbours: which is done in no way more then by this privy Tale-bearing, *whiſpering*. Which leadeth me to the next particular.

2. Speaking evil of our Brethren *Uncharitably*. A thing which many *Tongues* are guilty of. Many there are, who ſo long as they ſpeak nothing but what they know to be truth, they care not what they ſpeak of againſt their neighbours, divulging and blazing their ſins, yea, their *infirmities*, which they ought to have covered and kept ſecret. Thus dealt *Cham* by his father *Noah*; *Noah* being overtaken with drinking of Wine, (a liquor which probably not having been before acquainted with, he was ignorant of the ſtrength of it;) *he lay uncovered in his Tent*; *where Cham ſeeing his nakedneſs ran and told his two other brethren of it*, Gen. 9. 22. And even ſo deal many by their neighbours, be it their *fathers*, *Politicall*, *Spiritual*, *Natural*; Magiſtrates, Miniſters, Parents, or whoever elſe; ſuch ſins as they ſee or hear of in them, though they be but infirmities, and but once committed (as *Noahs* was, of whom we never read that he was ſo overtaken a ſecond time) they will not ſpare to divulge them, to ſpeak of them, not onely *ſecretly*, (which without juſt cauſe they ought not to do,) but alſo *openly*, to the diſparaging and diſgracing of them. A thing too common every where. So our Mr. *Perkins* took notice of it in his time, who complains that ſuch *tale-bearing* was *the common table-talk in England*, inſomuch that *it was wonderful*

2. Speaking evil of them Uncharitably.

Perkins Government of the Tongue, *Cap.* 7.

derful to see how those who were otherwise godly were overtaken with it. And I wish there were not too just cause for the like complaint at this day. In all meetings, feasts and banquetings, how usual a thing is it to hear the vices and faults of others tript open? Thus do many, while they are eating and drinking, and that (it may be) too liberally, feed upon the good names of others; uttering what they know, or conceive to be evil in them, whereas in the mean time, what is good and praise worthy in them they pass it by in silence, taking no notice of it; being therein like unto *flesh-flies*, which leaving the sound parts, seize onely upon the sores. An uncharitable, and unchristian practice: which I wish and earnestly desire it may be seriously considered and thought of by such as are guilty of it, or obnoxious to it; which who is not? In speaking of others, what we know to be praise-worthy, and exemplary in them, speak of it, and spare not. But not so what tendeth to their defamation, though never so true.

Labuntur nitidis, scabrisque tenacius hærent.

Quest. How the sins of others may be spoken of.

Quest. But may not one speak of the sins of another, occasionally, openly, or secretly?

Answ. 1. If *open* and *notorious* sins, they may be spoken of, so as it be not done out of malice, or ill will to the person spoken of, but out of good will to the persons spoken to, to warn them to beware of falling into the like. Upon such an account it is that the sins of Gods Saints, some of them, as *Noahs Drunkenness*, *Davids Adultery and Murther*, *Peters denying and forswearing of his Master*, are left upon record in Scripture;

Answ. 1. If open and notorious.

And

And upon the like account, upon a juſt occaſion they may be ſpoken of: But ſo as it be vvith what charity and tenderneſs may be; ſo handling their *ſins* as vve vvould do the *ſores* of our own bodies.

2. If *ſecret*, known onely to the perſon ſpeaking, here he is to be wary, not ſpeaking of them but where he is called to it; which in ſome caſes men are. As where ſome miſchief is intended againſt another, he that is privy to it, not onely may, but ought to acquaint his Brother with it, that ſo being forewarned he may prevent the danger. Thus *Jonathan* underſtanding his fathers purpoſe to kill his friend *David*, he goeth and telleth him of it, 1 *Sam.*19.2. And the like we read of *Johanan* that he did to *Gedeliah*; being privy to *Iſhmaels* conſpiracy againſt him he revealeth it to him, *Jer.*40.14. And ſo of *Pauls Nephew*, his Siſters ſon, who hearing of the *Jews laying in wait to kill Paul, he went and entred into the Caſtle, and told him of it*, Act.23.16. And ſo, where others are, or may be endangered by keeping company vvith the perſon vvith whom they converſe; or vvhere a mans ſelf may by his ſilence become acceſſary to anothers crime, as in the caſe of *Murder* or *Treaſon*. In theſe, and ſome other caſes, men not onely may, but ought to reveal vvhat they know. But not ſo vvhere ſins are ſecret, proceeding meerly from humane frailty and infirmity: ſuch ſins it is the duty of a Chriſtian to hide and cover vvhat he may. Even as *Shem* and *Japhet* did unto their father *Noah*, when they heard of his nakedneſs, they *took a garment*,

2. Secret ſins not to be divulged without juſt cauſe.

ment, and laying it upon both their ſhoulders, went backward, and covered it, Gen. 9. 23. For which act of theirs, being come to himſelf, whileſt he curſed *Cham* for diſcovering of it, he bleſſed them (as it there followeth) *ver.* 25, 26, 27. And the like do we to our *Fathers*, and *Brethren*. Being privy to their *infirmities*, ſtand not gazing upon them, but rather paſs them by: Which (ſaith *Solomon*) is the glory of a man, *Prov.* 19. 11. *It is the glory of a man to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*, or to *paſs by an infirmity*. And *Cover* them; which (as the *Wiſeman* tells us) is a means to procure love, *Prov.* 17. 9. *He that covereth a tranſgreſſion, ſeeketh*, (or (as the margin readeth it) *procureth*) *love*. Eſpecially where we ſee evidences of true repentance for them. Such ſins *God* hath covered, by caſting the mantle of his ſons righteouſneſs upon them, (as they did their garment upon their fathers nakedneſs.) Now what he hath covered, let not us diſcover, by ſpeaking of it to their ſhame; which who ſo doth, let him make account to meet with the like requital from ſome others; being by Gods juſt judgment at ſome time or other paid home in his own coin. Thus take we heed that we *ſin not with our Tongues*, offending againſt our *neighbours*, by *ſpeaking* evil of them, whether *unjuſtly* or *uncharitably*.

2. Mocking of them.

2. To which let me add *mocking* of them, *ſcoffing* and *jeering* at them. Thus was *Iſaac* uſed by his brother *Iſmael*, Gen. 21. 9. *Sarah ſaw Iſhmael mocking him*; jeering *Iſaac*, and laughing him to ſcorn: which he did (as is probably con-

conceived) not meerly by his *geſtures*, but alſo by his *words*, caſting ſome bitter and malignant taunt upon him: vvhich the Apoſtle ſpeaking of, calleth it a *Perſecuting* of him, *Gal.* 4. 29. a *Tongue-Perſecution*. Thus vvas the Prophet *Eliſha* uſed by thoſe children, 2 *King.* 2. 23. As he vvas going to *Bethel*, a rabble of them coming out of the City *mocked him, and ſaid unto him, Go up thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head*: which vvords (as it may be thought) vvere put into their mouths by their Parents; For which they, and their Parents in them, were ſeverely puniſhed, there being no leſs then 42 *of them torn in pieces by two ſhe-Bears coming out of the wood* (as the ſtory there goeth on.) Thus they who tore the Prophet with their *tongues* were themſelves torn by the *teeth* of thoſe wilde beaſts. Like uſe the Kingly Prophet *David* met with, being after the like manner perſecuted by his malicious enemies, who (as he ſaith) *With hypocritical mockers in feaſts they gnaſhed upon him with their teeth*, Pſal. 35. 16. Thus was he derided by his wife *Michal*, who *looking out at a window ſaw him dancing before the Ark*, for which ſhe *deſpiſing him in her heart* (as we have it, 1 *Chron.* 15. 29.) at his return ſhe goeth forth to meet him, ſaluting him with a bitter taunt; *How glorious was the King of Iſrael to day*, (ſaith ſhe) *who uncovered himſelf to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his ſervants, as one of the vain fellows ſhamefully uncovereth himſelf*, 2 Sam. 6. 20. And thus was he ſcoffed at by thoſe who ſought his ruine, who inſulted over him in the day of his diſtreſs,

of

of whom we may hear him often complaining, as Pſal. 35. 21. *Yea, they opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, Aha, Aha, our eyes have ſeen it.* And the like again, *Pſal.*40.15. 70.3. The like uſe the Prophet *Jeremy* met with, who bemoaning his condition to his God, ſaith, *I am in deriſion daily, every one mocketh me,* Jer. 20. 7. And ſo did our bleſſed *Saviour* himſelf, in the hiſtory of whoſe Paſſion, we read how that his malicious enemies the Jews, having *platted a crown of thornes, and put it upon his head, and a reed into his hand, they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, ſaying, Hail King of the Jews,* Matth. 27. 29. And herein have many of Gods *Saints* been made conformable to this their *head,* ſuffering from wicked tongues in like manner as he did. So the Apoſtle tells us of thoſe *Martyrs* of whom he ſpeaketh, Heb. 11. among whoſe ſufferings he reckons up this as none of the leaſt. *Some of them had trials of cruel mockings, ver.* 36. So have many others had; and daily have. And no wonder, there being every where ſo many foul mouthes that are ready thus to ſpit upon thoſe who are better then themſelves. Such the Apoſtles foretold there ſhould be in the laſt times, which St. *Jude* puts the Saints in mind of, *Jude* 18. *Beloved, remember ye the words which were ſpoken before of* (or by) *the Apoſtles of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, how that they told you there ſhould be mockers in the laſt time.* But take we heed that we be not found in this number: Which whoſo are, they hereby ſhew themſelves whoſe brood they are, not *Iſaacks,* but *Iſhmaels*; deſerving the

the like puniſhment as he met with, to be caſt out of the *Church*, as he was out of his *fathers houſe*, Gen. 21. 10. Such, they are abominable both to *God* and *men*. So the *Wiſeman* tells us. To *men*, Prov. 24. 9. *The Scorner is an abomination to men.* To *God*, who (as he ſaith) ſcorneth them whileſt they ſcorn others, *Prov.* 3. 34. *Surely he ſcorneth the ſcorners.* Now take we heed that we do not thus *ſin with our Tongues* in *ſpeaking againſt* our neighbours, *ſpeaking evil* of them in this or any of the aforeſaid ways.

2. Wiſhing evil to them by Curſing them.

2. And (ſecondly) whileſt we take heed how we ſpeak evil of them, do the like of *wiſhing evil* to them; of *Curſing* them. This is one of the *evils of the Tongue* mentioned by St. *James*; *Therewith bleſs we God, and therewith curſe we men*, Jam. 3. 9. A thing very common with prophane mouthes, which ſpeaking of thoſe whom they hate, they are ready to let fly helliſh imprecations againſt them, wiſhing them all the evils they can. *His mouth is full of curſing*, (ſay *David*, and *Paul*, ſpeaking of the wicked man) *Pſal.* 10. 7. *Rom.* 3. 14. Thus we read how the Philiſtines Champion, *Goliah*, *curſed David by his Gods*, 1 Sam. 17. 43. And *Shimei* following after him, *Curſed ſtill as he came*, 2 Sam. 16. 5, 13. Many the like inſtances might be reckoned up, of ſuch whoſe tongues have been notoriouſly guilty in this kind; would to God there were none of them to be found amongſt us. But take we heed that ſuch poyſon never drop from our lips; whatever evils we ſuffer from others, yet let not our tongues ſin in wiſhing evil to them. Herein

we have righteous *Job* for an example, *Job* 31. who there making a ſolemn proteſtation of his integrity, ſhewing how he made conſcience of many duties, and kept himſelf from many ſins, among other he bringeth in this, his keeping his tongue from curſing his enemies; *Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin* (ſaith he) *by wiſhing a curſe to his ſoul*, ver. 30. And ſee that herein we imitate and follow him. Though others Perſecute and Curſe us, yet do not we the like to them, but bleſs them. *Bleſs them that curſe you*, (ſaith our *Saviour* to his Diſciples) *Matth.* 5.44. *Bleſs them that perſecute you, bleſs, and curſe not*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Rom.* 12. 14. This is truly *Chriſtian.*

Object. Holy men in Scripture curſing their Enemies.

Obj. But, (it may be ſaid) how then is it that we meet with ſo many *Imprecations* falling from the mouthes of Gods ſervants, whom in Scripture we finde ſo frequently curſing their enemies?

Anſw. They were ſuch as were Gods enemies.

Anſw. For anſwer briefly. 1. Thoſe whom they thus pronounced curſes againſt were not onely their enemies, but *Gods enemies* alſo; and upon that account chiefly it was that they curſed them.

Anſw. 2. They did it by ſpecial warrant.

2. This they did not without ſpecial *warrant and authority from God*, ſpeaking in his Name. Thus it is ſaid of the Prophet *Eliſha*, that looking back upon thoſe children that mocked him, *he curſed them*, but how? *In the name of the Lord*, 2 *King.* 2. 24. that is, by a divine inſtinct, having received commiſſion from the Lord to do what he did. And the like are we to conceive of other

of

of the ſervants of God, as *Moſes*, *David*, &c. whom we find doing the like to their enemies. This they did, not out of a private revenge againſt them, as they were their enemies, but doing what they did by an extraordinary ſpirit; So as therein they are no patterns for our imitation. Let not us, not having the like warrant, dare to do the like to any, whoever they be.

Chriſtians in ſpeaking to have a ſpecial regard of ſuch as God hath ſet over them.

Wherein have we a ſpecial regard and reſpect to ſuch as *God hath ſet over us*, taking heed of *ſpeaking evil* of them, or *wiſhing evil* to them.

1. Not ſpeaking Evil of them.

1. Of *Speaking Evil* of them. Such tongues there were in the Apoſtles time; ſome that were not afraid to *blaſpheme Magiſtrates*, to ſpeak evil both of their *Perſons* and *Office*. Such St. *Peter* ſpeaketh of, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. *Preſumptuous are they, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities.* And ſo St. *Jude*, Jude 8. *They deſpiſe dominion, and ſpeak evil of dignities.* Not willing that there ſhould be any authority in the world, but that they might live as they liſt, they ſought by all ways to defame thoſe that exerciſed it, blaſpheming even the higheſt Powers; Δόξας, *ſpeaking evil of Glories*, (ſo the Original hath it in both thoſe Texts,) that is, of *Kings* and *Princes*, which are *Stars* of the firſt magnitude, yea *Suns* within their dominions, ſupreme Governours, ſhining moſt gloriouſly in the world. This be we ware of, remembring whoſe charge it is, *Touch not mine Anointed*, Pſal. 105. 15. Sacred perſons, ſuch as are conſecrated and ſet apart to publick Offices, whether in *Church*, or *State*, ſpecially the

ſupreme Magiſtrate; take heed of touching him, as with the *hand*, to offer violence to his *Perſon*, ſo with the *tongue*, to defame him.

2. Not wiſhing evil to them.

2. Of *wiſhing ill* to them, *Curſing* them. Being *children*, do not dare to do this to our *natural Parents*. Which whoſo of old ſhould have dared to do, it had been death to him. So runs the Law, *Lev.* 20. 9. *Every one that curſeth his father, or mother, ſhall be ſurely put to death.* And being *Subjects*, do not dare to do it to our *Governours*. *Thou ſhalt not revile the Gods*, (or *Judges*, who are ſo called, *Pſal.* 82. 6. *I have ſaid ye are Gods*,) *nor curſe the Ruler of thy people*, Exod. 22. 28. *Curſe not the King, no not in thy thought, and curſe not the rich in thy bedchamber*, Eccleſ. 10. 20. Supreme and ſubordinate Governours, however through their political or perſonal miſcarriages they may deſerve to be ill thought and ſpoken of, yet let thoſe under their government beware, as of doing the former without juſt and apparant cauſe, ſo much more of the latter; as of ſpeaking evil of them, ſo much more of wiſhing ill to them, *Curſing* of them. This let none dare to do in their *thought*, much leſs with their *Tongues*, though never ſo ſecretly. Which whoſo ſhall dare to do, let them hear what the *Preacher* telleth them they may expect and look for, to be by ſome means or other diſcovered. *For* (ſaith he) *a bird of the air ſhall carry the voyce, and that which hath wings ſhall utter the matter.* Such curſes, how ſecret ſoever, as they are heard in heaven, ſo God can find out ways to bring them to light upon earth,

for

for the juſt puniſhment of ſuch offenders. Thus take we heed of ſinning with our *Tongues*, whether by *ſpeaking evil* of others, or *wiſhing evil* to them.

2. And whileſt we thus keep our Tongues from ſuch Obtrectations and Imprecations, take heed alſo of *Adulations*, Flatteries. Not ſpeaking evil of others, beware alſo of ſpeaking well of thoſe who deſerve it not, or of ſpeaking of them above their deſerts, and that out of *flattery*. Such was that applauſe which the people gave to King *Herod*; when they had heard his Oration which he had made to them, *They gave a ſhout, ſaying, It is the voice of a God, and not of a Man*, Act. 12. 22. Thus did they, like profane Sycophants, give Divine Honour unto him; which he, not rebuking them for it, but being tickled and taken with it was ſeverely puniſhed for, being made a ſpectacle to them, and to the world, eaten up with worms, Σκωληκόβρωτος, devoured by Lice, or ſome other vermine (as *Antiochus* is ſaid to have been before him, 2 *Maccab.* 9. 9.) whereby he was manifeſted to himſelf, and others, to be what he was, not a *God*, but a *Man*, a mortal man, *Worms-meat*. Let not us thus wrong our ſelves, and others, by thus ſpeaking too highly of them in a paraſitical way, thinking by ſo extolling them to advance our ſelves. Such *Paraſites* were *Saul's Courtiers*, who by *ſlandering* of *David*, and *flattering* of their *Maſter*, thought to ingratiate themſelves with him: But hear we what *David* ſaith of them, *Pſal.* 12. 2, 3. *With flattering lips, and with a double heart do they ſpeak; The Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lips.* Among other ſins

2. The Tongue to be kept from Flattery.

of the Tongue take we heed of this; of which more hereafter.

Thus have I done with the firſt of theſe three Heads, to which (as you ſee) divers ſins of the *Tongue* may be reduced; Speaking *Of* our Neighbour: Paſs we to the ſecond, which is,

2. Speaking *To* him, or *with* him, in our converſe and communication with others. Here take heed again that we *ſin not with our Tongues*, by ſpeaking otherwiſe then as becometh Chriſtians to do: Which that we may not do, have we a ſpecial regard to theſe four things; *What* we ſpeak, *To whom*, *When*, and *How*.

Speaking To, or With our neigbours, where take heed

1. What we ſpeak; having a regard to

1. To the Quantity, not ſpeaking too much.

1. *What* we ſpeak: where have a regard both to the *Quantity* and *Quality* of our ſpeech.

1. To the *Quantity*, that we ſpeak not too much; a thing which many, ſome by Nature, others by Cuſtome, are very prone and ſubject to; who ſuffer their tongues to run riot, being never weary of ſpeaking, but uttering all that is in their minde, yea, and, it may be, more, ſpeaking of what before they never thought of. This will not the *Wiſe-man* do: *Vir ſapit qui pauca loquitur*; *He that refraineth his lips is wiſe*, Prov. 10.19. *He that hath knowledg ſpareth his words*, *Prov.* 17. 27. ſpeaking no more then what is fitting for him to do. Not pouring forth his words as water, which the fool is ready to do. *A fool is full of words*, Eccl. 10.14. *A fool uttereth all his minde, but a wiſe man keepeth it in till afterwards*, Prov. 29.11. So it is, *Empty veſſels* ſound moſt: And ſo do *empty ſouls*, empty heads and hearts, which are full of nothing but winde, they are often guilty

of

of what *Elihu* wrongfully and falſly charged upon *Job*, Job 35. 16. *They open their mouths in vain, and multiply words without knowledg.* This be we ware of, being more ready to hear then ſpeak. To this end (ſaid the Heathen) *God hath given to Man but one Tongue and two Ears*, that he might hear more, and ſpeak leſs, not ſpeak all that he heareth.

Many *Arguments* might be uſed for the reſtraining of Men and Women from ſuch *Verboſity* and *Loquacity*, from much ſpeaking. Arguments againſt Verboſity.

1. Hereby they may *prejudice and wrong themſelves*. It may be, in their *Eſtates*. *In all labour* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *there is profit, but the talk of the lips tendeth onely to penury*, Prov. 14. 23. Idle prating (for of that he there ſpeaketh, not of ſerious diſcourſe, which is beneficial to the hearers. *The lips of the righteous feed many*, as he before ſaith of it, *Cap.* 10. *verſ.* 21.) to which they that are addicted are ſeldom good for any thing elſe, ſpendeth and waſteth time, and ſo taketh men off from better employments, and ſo wrongeth them in their Eſtates. However, in their *Reputations*, bringing contempt upon them, making them to be reputed *fools*, how wiſe ſoever they think themſelves to be. So much we may learn from the *Wiſe-man*, whom we may often hear calling them fools for ſo doing; as in thoſe Texts forecited, *Prov.* 29 11. *Eccl.* 10. 14. ſo again, *Eccl.* 5. 3. *A fools voice is known by multitude of words.* Thus do ſuch talkers diſparage themſelves by their much ſpeaking; wherein they ſhew themſelves to be κενόδοξοι, *deſirous of vain-glory*, *Arg.* 1. Hereby men may wrong themſelves

which the Apoſtle dehorteth Chriſtians from, *Gal.* 5.26. Having high thoughts of themſelves, thinking themſelves wiſer then others, and affecting to be ſo reputed by others; hereupon they monopolize diſcourſe to themſelves, ſpeaking more then others. But hereby they loſe what they ſeek for.

Arg. 2. In much ſpeaking there is vanity and ſin.

2. In much ſpeaking men often *ſpeak what they ought not.* So ſaith the *Apoſtle* of thoſe *younger Widows*, whom he would not have taken into the order of *Widows* or *Deaconiſſes*, to be maintained at the Churches charge, 1 *Tim.* 5.13. *They learn to be idle*, (ſaith he) *wandring about from houſe to houſe; and not onely idle, but tatlers alſo and buſie-bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not*, Τὰ μὴ δέοντα, things not becoming them. This they who are given to much ſpeaking are ſubject to, to ſpeak many *vain* words. *In many words there are divers vanities*, Eccl. 5.7. Yea, ordinarily, ſome *ſin*, as Waters over-flowing the banks uſe to carry ſome ſlime with them. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin*, *Prov.* 10.19. Men and Women that are full of talk cannot but talk amiſs ſometimes. Among many words ſome will be ready to drop from them which they ſhall afterwards have cauſe to repent of; ſomewhat that may be prejudicial and hurtfull to their *Neighbours* and *themſelves*. To their *Neighbours*, tending to their reproach; *Surely*, (ſaith the Preacher) *the ſerpent will bite without enchantment, and a babler is no better*, Eccl. 10.11. wanting other matter of diſcourſe, rather then be ſilent, they will charge and diſcharge againſt their

their Neighbours, ripping up their faults; if not unjuſtly, yet uncharitably. And as to their Neighbours, ſo to *Themſelves*: So he there goeth on in the Verſes following, *verſ.* 12, 13. *The words of a wiſe mans mouth* (ſaith he) *are gracious; but the lips of a fool will ſwallow up himſelf. The beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſs, and the end of his talk is miſchievous madneſs.* So again, *Prov.* 10. 8. *A prating fool ſhall fall*, repeated again, *verſ.* 10 Thus do men in much ſpeaking often vent that which is evil; hurtfull to their neighbours and themſelves; whereof (as I ſaid) they may have cauſe afterwards to repent: The conſideration whereof ſhould make them the more watchful over themſelves to *bridle their Tongues.* So it did the Philoſopher *Xenocrates*, one of *Plato*'s Scholars, and School-fellow with *Ariſtotle*, (as *Valerius Maximus* reports it of him:) He being in company amongſt ſome Roarers and Railers, was ſilent; and being asked why he was ſo, he returns anſwer, That *he had often repented him that he had ſpoken, but never that he held his peace.* And, truly, ſo it is, though Chriſtians may ſometimes have cauſe to repent them of their ſilence, of not ſpeaking, or ſpeaking too little, as where God calleth them to admoniſh and reprove ſin in others; yet much oftner of their ſpeaking too much: Which ſhould put them upon the learning of that *Leſſon* which St. *James* teacheth them, *Jam.* 1. 19. *My beloved Brethren, Let every man be ſwift to hear, and ſlow to ſpeak*: Taking heed of this diſeaſe, this evil of the Tongue, which is none of the leaſt,

Dixiſſe ſæpè pœnituit, tacuiſſe verò nunquam.

least, *Multiloquium*, *Verbosity*, *Loquacity*, much speaking.

Arg. 3. It is offensive to God and men.

Divers other *Arguments*, if need were, might be made use of; as, That much speaking is generally *offensive to those that hear it*: But, however, it is *offensive to God*, to whom (as before we heard) every one must be accountable for every idle word. So our Saviour tells the Pharisees in that obvious Text, *Matth.* 12. 36. *I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.* πᾶν ῥῆμα ἀργὸν· Not onely impious and wicked, but vain and idle words; of which kinde there are not a few ordinarily poured forth in much speaking. Thus take we heed that we sin not in the *Quantity* of our words.

2. To the Quality of our words: where take of

2. Nor yet in the *Quality*. Where divers things are to be taken heed of; three of which we finde put together by the Apostle in that one Verse, *Eph.* 5. 4. where speaking of some sins which he would not have so much as *named* among Christians, he reckons these among the rest; *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient.* All which three are by Expositors looked upon as miscarriages of the Tongue; each of which let every of us beware of.

1. Filthy speaking.

1. Of *Filthiness*; Αἰσχρότης· which word, as it signifieth all kinde of *Obscenity*, in *Actions*, *Gestures*, and *Behaviour*, such as are common in promiscuous Dancings and Revellings; or in *Garb* and *Apparel*, such as is used in Masques and Stage-plays, where Men do personate Women; so also in *Language*, Ribaldry and filthy speaking.

That

That the Apoſtle is apprehended there to have a ſpecial eye at, as elſewhere he explains himſelf, in that other Text, *Col.* 3. 8. where he requireth Chriſtians, among other ſins there mentioned, to *put off*, or *put away*, to abandon this *filthy communication*, to put it out of their month: Where the word is a little different from the former, but importing the ſame thing, Αἰσχρολογίαν, *turpiloquium*, *filthy ſpeaking*. This he elſewhere calleth *Corrupt* or *Rotten communication*, charging Chriſtians not to ſuffer it to fall from their lips, *Eph.* 4. 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.* Λόγος σαπρὸς, *ſermo putridus*, rotten and unſavoury ſpeech; which is like a ſtinking breath, which is noiſom and offenſive to him that is within the reach of it; or like ſtinking and unſavoury meat, which is loathſom to the ſtomach: So is ſuch corrupt communication to the ears and hearts of all that are *godly*. And as to them, ſo much more to *God* himſelf; who, as he hath *pure Eyes, purer then to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. ſo he hath alſo *pure Ears*, purer then to hear ſuch language without deteſtation and abhorrence. Take we heed, then, ſuch words do not, at any time, proceed out of our mouthes: which, where they uſe to do, it is too plain an evidence of an *impure heart*. A ſtinking breath doth ſhew the lungs to be corrupted, and ſo doth ſuch rotten language ſhew the heart to be rotten.

A thing loathſom to God and thoſe that are godly.

And as it is thus offenſive to God and thoſe that are godly, ſo it is *infectious* to others. As a ſtinking breath may infect him upon whom it is breathed,

Infectious to others.

breathed, ſo may corrupt words corrupt the hearer. So much the Heathen Poet *Menander* taketh notice of in one of his *Comedies*, from whom St *Paul* taketh thoſe words which he maketh uſe of againſt ſuch Heathens as he was, 1 *Cor.* 15. 33.

Verſus ex Thaide Menandri. Φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρῆθ' ὁμιλίαι κακαὶ. *Evil communications corrupt good manners.* So do obſcene and filthy ſpeeches, they are apt to leave a taint upon him that heareth them, though otherwiſe morally vertuous, yea, though really gracious. And therefore for Gods ſake, our brethrens, and our own, avoid all ſuch language. Μὴ ὀνομαζέσθω, *Let it not be once named among us, as becometh Saints*, not heard from the mouthes of any who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians.

2. Fooliſh talking.

And (ſecondly) abandoning ſuch filthy ſpeaking, beware alſo of *Fooliſh Talking*. That is the ſecond Particular. Μωρολογίαν, *Stultiloquium*; ſuch talk as is uuſavoury, wanting the ſalt of wiſdom and diſcretion to ſeaſon it, and ſo ſerveth for no other uſe but to render the ſpeaker deſpicable or ridiculous. Such ſpeech the Apoſtle would not by any means have found in the mouthes of Chriſtians, to whom he giveth that advice and charge, *Col.* 4. 6. *Let your ſpeech be always with grace, ſeaſoned with ſalt*: that is, with diſcretion and prudence, ſo that it may be ſavoury, reliſhing well in the palate of them that taſte it. Not vain and fooliſh. Such diſcourſe the ſame Apoſtle exhorts *Timothy* to beware of, 2 *Tim.* 2. 23. *But fooliſh and unlearned Queſtions avoid.* And ſo *Titus*, Tit. 3. 9. *But avoid fooliſh queſtions, and genealogies, and contentions, (viz.* about

about ſuch matters as were not worth the contending for,) *for they are unprofitable, and vain.* Such was the diſcourſe of ſome in thoſe times, of whom that Apoſtle ſaith, that *having ſwerved from the rules of faith and charity*, they *were turned aſide unto vain jangling*, 1 Tim. 1. 6. Εἰς ματαιολογίαν, *Vaniloquentiam*, ſpending their time in fruitleſs diſcourſes: Of whom again he ſpeaketh, *Tit.* 1. 10. *There are many unruly, and vain talkers.* Ματαιολόγοι; *Vaniloqui.* And are there not ſome, and too many ſuch, at this day, who ſpeaking, and it may be *ſpeaking evil, of the things that they underſtand not*, (as St. *Peter* ſaith of ſome falſe teachers and ſeducers in his time, 2 *Pet.* 2. 12.) they deſerve the name of *vain talkers.* But ſuch diſcourſe *Paul* would not have *Timothy* to lend an ear unto. *Neither give heed to fables, and endleſs genealogies*, (ſaith he) *which miniſter queſtions rather then edifyings*, 1 Tim. 1. 4. Now if he would not have him, or others, to lend an ear unto them, let not us ſpend our tongues and time upon them in ſpeaking of them. That is his advice again to *Timothy*, (which let the Miniſters of Chriſt take notice of, and apply to themſelves in a ſpecial manner) 1 *Tim.* 6. 20. *O Timothy keep that which is committed to thy truſt, avoiding profane and vain bablings.* As for the treaſure of ſound and wholſom doctrine, which was committed to his cuſtody, (as it is to all the Miniſters of Chriſt,) he would have him keep that ſafe, maintaining of it, and (if need were) *contending for it*, and that *earneſtly*, (as St. *Jude* calls upon all Chriſtians to do, *Jud.* 3.) But as for

for profane, and *vain bablings*, Κενοφωνίας, contesting and disputing about needless and fruitless questions, which having no floure in them are not worth the bolting or sifting, affording no matter of profit, are not worth the contending about; these he would not have him to trouble himself, or others with; which whilest it could not do him or others any good, it might do much harm. So he tells him, 2 *Tim.*2.16. where pressing the like both *Exhortation* and *Dehortation* upon him that he had done before, *viz.* that he would *study to approve himself unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, but shunning profane and vain bablings*, he subjoyns as a Reason for the latter; *For* (saith he) *they will increase unto more ungodliness*. Much hurt may be done by such discourses, but no good. And therefore let, as the *Ministers* of Christ in special, so all *Christians* beware of them.

3. Jesting. And so thirdly of *Jesting*. That is the third thing there mentioned. Εὐτραπελία, a word properly signifying *facetiousness*, a merry and witty manner of speaking; which being of a middle nature, may be taken either in a good, or a bad sence: In the former it was used by *Philosophers* of old, *Aristotle* and others, who reckoned this as one of their *moral virtues*: But in the *New Testament* it is still used in the latter, in an ill sence; not for *Urbanity*, but for *Scurrility*, immoderate jesting, unbefiting the gravity and sanctity of a Christian. Now such jesting take we heed of, that we do not thus *sin with our Tongues*.

Not

Not that all *jesting* is unlawful and forbidden. Whether it be *sweet* or *tart*, in some cases it may be used.

1. *Merry Jests*, being witty and pleasing, may be used in company at feasts or meetings; where whilest a *merry heart* is allowed and approved of, (*Go thy way*, (saith the Preacher) *eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*, *Eccles.*9.7. and we read of the Primitive Christians at *Jerusalem*, how that *they breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart*, Act. 2. 46.) a *merry tongue* is not disallowed, so long as it be civil, modest and inoffensive; such discourse we find at *Sampsons marriage feast*, Judg.14.12. where he putteth forth a *Riddle* to his Companions, which if they could within such a time declare, they should receive so much from him; if not, he should receive the like from them; a thing (as it seemeth) very usual and common in those times. Such pleasant and innocent exercise of the wit at such meetings is not to be disallowed, which may serve, as to exhilarate and refresh the spirits of the hearers, so to keep them, or take them off from worse employment. But as for *scurrilous*, or *prophane jests* (which are too common in the mouthes of many, who having conceived, are big with them, and cannot leave till they bring them forth, preferring their jest (it may be) before their friends, or their God,) such as have more wit then modesty in them, this *Civility* will not endure, much less *Christianity*. Such are the *jests* that *Paul* there prohibits; And such be we ware of.

Facetious jesting not disallowed, but scurrilous.

2. As-

Tart jests sometimes warrantable, but not bitter.

2. As also of *bitter and biting Jests.* Not that all tart and smart jests, neither, are wholly forbidden. Such was that which we finde made use of by the Prophet *Eliah*, who jeered *Baals Priests* after that manner (as before we heard) bidding them *Cry aloud, for their God was a God that was either talking, or pursuing, or journeying, or sleeping*, so as he had need to be awaked, 1 *King.* 18.27. And such jests (I say) in reproving of others, persons obstinate and refractory, may sometimes be used. But herein let Christians be wary, taking heed of bitter and sarcastical jests, such as savour of as much (if not more) malice as wit, wounding the credit and reputation of those whom they are let fly at. This is one thing which *Paul* willeth that Christians should put away, *Eph.* 4. 31. *Let all bitterness be put away from you, with all malice.* Here are three of those evils of the tongue which come under this Head. To which add, in the next place;

4. Lying.

4. *Lying*, which is to speak otherwise then a man thinketh, with a purpose to deceive. This is properly *Lying*; Not all false speaking, when a man speaketh somewhat which is not true, which he may do against his will, apprehending it to be truth, which yet also is to be taken heed of; but when he speaketh contrary to what he knoweth, his tongue crossing his heart. This let it be far from us. This will not a *Citizen of Zion* dare to do, of whom *David* giveth this Character, He is one that *speaketh the truth from his heart*, Psal. 15. 2. To this end is the *Tongue* given unto man, that it might be *Index animi*, the Interpreter of the

the mind, ſhewing and declaring what is in the heart. Let not the uſe of it then be thus perverted, to the uttering of what is not there. This we find frequently and expreſly prohibited and forbidden in the Scriptures. In the *Old Teſtament*; *Ye ſhall not ſteal, neither deal falſly, neither lie one to another*, Lev.19.11. In the *New*; *Lie not one to another*, Col. 3.9. which the Apoſtle there reckons up amongſt *the deeds of the old man. Wherefore put away lying, ſpeaking the truth every man to his neighbour*, Eph.4.25. This have we a care of, when we are called to ſpeak, as before a *Magiſtrate*, here ſpeak nothing but what we apprehend and believe to be true, though it may be to our own prejudice. *I ſpeak the words of truth, and ſoberneſs*, (ſaith *Paul* to *Feſtus*) *Act.26.25.* And ſo when we ſpeak occaſionally, and freely to others, in our civil communication and converſe, take heed that no words drop from our lips but what are words of truth. As for *Lyars*, they thereby ſhew whoſe children they are. *Ye are of your father the Devil, for he is a Lyar, and the Father of it* (ſaith our *Saviour* to the *Jews*) *Joh.8.44.* And of all ſins there is none that God hateth more then this, which is directly contrary to his Nature. He being *the God of truth* (as he is called, *Deut.32.4. Pſal.31.5.*) *a God that cannot lie*, (as the Apoſtle ſaith of him) *Tit.1.2.* he cannot but hate all lying. This is one of thoſe *ſeven things* which the *Wiſeman* ſaith *are an abomination to the Lord*, *A lying tongue*, Prov.6.17. So again *Prov.12.22. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.* And

whileſt he thus hateth this ſin he will ſeverely *puniſh* it. *A falſe witneſs ſhall not be unpuniſhed, and he that ſpeaketh lyes ſhall not eſcape*, Pro. 19.5. *Thou ſhalt deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing*, Pſal. 5. 6. that ſpeak a lye. Thus muſt *Lyars* make account to be puniſhed, and that both in this *life*, and *hereafter*: In *this life* with infamy and diſgrace, not to be regarded, or believed, no not when they ſpeak truth, which is a juſt reward of a *Lyar*. *What truth can be ſpoken of a Lyar?* Eccleſiaſtic. 34.4. *Hereafter*, in the life to come, where Lyars ſhall be excluded out of heaven. *Without are Dogs*, &c. *and whoſoever loveth, and maketh a lye*, Rev. 22.15. And caſt into Hell. *All Lyars ſhall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death*, Rev. 21.8. Take we heed then that we be not found guilty hereof; that we do not thus ſin with our Tongues, by uttering of *Lyes*, of what ſort or kinde ſoever: whether *merry* lyes, or *officious* lyes, or *pernicious* lyes, as they are commonly diſtinguiſhed. Take we heed to our tongues, that they be not tainted, or bliſtered with any of them.

Three ſorts of Lyes to be taken heed of.

1. Merry Lyes.

1. Not with *merry Lyes*; which, make the beſt of them, are but vain ſpeeches, whereof an account muſt be given, *Matth.* 12.36. And being contrary to truth, are not to be allowed. *We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*, (ſaith *Paul*) 2 *Cor.* 13.8. Neither may any man upon what account ſoever ſpeak againſt it, or what is contrary to it. This may not a man do for *profit*, much leſs for *pleaſure* and delight; whether

ther to himſelf, or others. It is one of the ſins which the Prophet *Hoſea* chargeth upon the *Jews*, *They made the King glad with their wickedneſs, and their Princes with their lyes*, Hoſ.7.3.

2. *Officious Lyes*; ſuch as are ſpoken for our own, or our neighbours profit and advantage, and that without any detriment or hurt to any other. Such lyes ſome are ready to diſpence with. But this do not we dare to do, hearkening to what the *Wiſeman* ſaith to us, *Prov.*23.23. *Buy the truth, but ſell it not.* One grain of truth is more worth then whatever gain we can make by the ſale of it; and therefore do not part with it at any rate. This is a thing which we may not do for *God*, who hath no need of our lyes. *Will ye ſpeak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?* (ſaith *Job* to his friends) *Job* 13.7. Much leſs for our *neighbours*, or yet our ſelves. 2. Officious Lyes.

3. And if not Officious, much leſs *Pernicious* Lyes, which may be prejudicial and hurtful to our neighbours, in their good names, eſtates, liberties, lives. All theſe abandon we. And ſo all kinde of *lying* whatever. 3. Pernicious Lyes.

As *Diſſimulation*. *He that hateth diſſembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him: when he ſpeaketh fair believe him not, for there are ſeven abominations in his heart*, Prov.26.24,25. Such Perſons *David* ſaith he would have nothing to do with. *I have not ſate* (ſaith he) *with vain perſons, neither will I go in with Diſſemblers*, Pſal.26.4.

And ſo *Equivocation*, a darkening and hiding

of truth under dubious and deceitful words. Which however minced and made light of by *Romaniſts*, yet ought not ſo to be by upright and ſincere Chriſtians, ſuch as will approve themſelves to God and man. Let not them uſe their tongues to the framing of deceit, in what kinde ſoever. *Deliver my ſoul, O Lord,* (ſaith *David*) *from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue,* Pſal. 120. 2. Not that all truth is always to be ſpoken, but what we ſpeak let it be nothing but truth, and that ſo as others may underſtand it. Thus take we heed that we ſin not with our *Tongues*, by ſpeaking falſly, by *Lying*.

5. Flattering

To which join that which is near a kin to it, if not a daughter of the ſame Mother, *Flattering*. Which is a ſpeaking of ſmooth and fair words to others, for the ingratiating of a mans ſelf with them. This let Chriſtians beware how they do. Not upon ſuch an account applauding others, praiſing and commending them above and beyond their deſerts, thinking by that means to curry favour with them. This who ſo ſhall do, let him hear what the *Wiſeman* tells him, *Prov.* 27. 14. *He that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voice, riſing early in the morning, it ſhall be counted a curſe to him.* Such feigned honours and applauſes, are by men that are wiſe and lovers of truth, as much abhorred, as if they were ſo many imprecations and curſes.

Chriſtians not to applaud others for their own advantage

Not to ſooth them up in their ſinful courſes.

Nor yet upon a like account *ſoothing* up others in their ſinful ways and courſes, applying *lenitives*, where *Corroſives* were proper; applauding them for what they ought to be reproved. This who

who ſo ſhall do, let him make account in the end to miſs of his *end*, of finding favour with thoſe whom he thus flattereth: *He that rebuketh a man* (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſhall afterwards finde more favour then he that flattereth with his tongue.* Prov. 28. 23.

Not to flatter them for their hurt.

And whileſt we forbear to do this out of a reſpect to our ſelves, take heed much more of doing it for the *hurt of others*: Whether for their *Spiritual* or *Temporal* hurt.

Their Spiritual hurt.

For their *Spiritual* hurt, to draw and entice them into ſome ſin. Such is the practice of the *ſtrange woman*, the Harlot, which *Solomon* ſpeaks of, deſiring God to deliver every one from her; *The ſtranger which flattereth with her words*, *Prov.* 2. 16. & 7. 5. thereby alluring and enticing ſtrangers to be too familiar with her. And the like do Drunkards, and other debauched perſons, who by ſmooth and fair words draw others into their ſociety, to run into the ſame exceſs of riot with them.

Their Temporal hurt.

Or for their *Temporal* hurt, to bring them into ſome danger, which is often done by fair words, being not ſuſpected, which are like a bait where the hook is not ſeen. Such *Flatterers* there have been many. Such was *Davids* familiar friend to him, as he ſets him forth, *Pſal.* 55. 21. *The words of his mouth were ſmoother then butter, but war was in his heart; his words were ſofter then oyl, yet were they drawn ſwords.* And ſuch were the *Phariſees* to our *Saviour*; who, deſigning to intrap and intangle him in his talk, ſent their Agents, their *Diſciples*, who, according to their

Maſters direction, ſpake him fair to his face, highly applauding and commending of him, *Saying, Maſter, we know thou art true, and teacheſt the way of God in truth, neither careſt thou for any man, for thou regardeſt not the perſons of men. Matth.* 22. 16. Such uſe do men often make of their tongues, by flattering of their Neighbours ſpreading a Net for their feet, (as *Solomon* hath it) *Prov.* 29. 5. By their ſmoothe words endangering, and it may be undoing of them. *A flattering mouth worketh ruine*, (ſaith he) *Prov.* 26. 28. Ruine to a mans Neighbour, who is unwarily taken with it, and, in the end, to a mans ſelf. This let us abhor, as being not onely an unchriſtian, but an *inhumane* practice. One being asked which was the worſt of all beaſts, returned anſwer, *Of wilde beaſts the Tyrant, and of tame beaſts the flatterer.* And another is reported to ſay, what juſtly he might, that *Flatterers were worſe then Crowes, or Ravens; for, whereas theſe eat onely dead Carrion, they feed on the living.*

A double Tongue not to be endured in a Chriſtians mouth.

And to theſe let me joyn, as a Branch of the ſame root, the *Double Tongue.* Such tongues the Apoſtle St. *Paul* would by no means have *Deacons* have; *Not double-tongued*, 1 Tim. 3. 8. Μὴ διλόγους, *idem quod* Διγλώσσους, *Bilingues.* Such are they who vary their ſpeech, now ſpeaking one thing, then another contrary to it: As the unconſtant man, who ever and anon is changing his mind, and upon that account called by St. *James* Ἀνὴρ δίψυχος, *a double-minded man*, Jam. 1. 8. being of one minde to day, and to morrow of another; ſo the *double-tongued* man he varies in his words,

words, ſpeaking contrary to himſelf. Amongſt which are ſome baſe *flatterers*, who having a *double-heart*, they have alſo a *double tongue*. So *David* deſcribeth them. *Pſal.* 12. 2. *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they ſpeak. Ex eodem ore calidum & frigidum ſpirant*; Out of the ſame mouth they breathe hot and cold, ſpeaking fair to their neighbours before their face, but foul behinde their backs. Thus (as St. *James* ſaith of it) *Jam.* 3. 10. *Out of the ſame mouth proceedeth bleſſing and curſing. But*, (as he goeth on) *my Brethren, theſe things ought not to be. Doth a fountain ſend forth at the ſame place ſweet water and bitter?* Verſ. 11. Let not ſuch *double-tongues* be found in any of our mouthes. Thus beware of *Flattery*, of all kinds or degrees of it.

And to this let me ſubjoyn that which is contrary to it, being an extreme on the other hand, *Moroſity*, *froward* and *churliſh ſpeaking*. This the *Wiſeman* looketh upon as a mark of a *naughty perſon*, Prov. 6. 12. *A naughty perſon*, (a *man of Belial*, ſaith the Original) *a wicked man walketh with a froward mouth*. So it is ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ, for the moſt part: Being *Niger ore*, (as the *Poet* ſaith of *Zoilus*, though in a different ſence) having a black mouth, a froward and churliſh tongue; *Rem magnam præſtat, Zoile, ſi bonus es*, it giveth a great ground of ſuſpition that the heart is not right. And upon that, and other accounts, he adviſeth all to put it away, *Prov.* 4. 24. *Put away from thee a froward mouth*, (or *frowardneſs*

6. Moroſity, froward and churliſh ſpeaking.

Martial. Epigram.

of mouth.) This ſome by nature are more ſubject to then others, their bodily conſtitution inclining them to it; but let them not give way to it, but put it away: It being a great Evil in it ſelf, offenſive unto *God*; and the cauſe of much evil to a mans ſelf, and others. *Grievous words ſtir up anger*, Prov. 15. 1. *A froward man ſoweth ſtrife*, Prov. 16. 28. And upon this account (were there no other) it cannot but be *hateful* unto *Man*. And as to Man, ſo to *God*; *A froward mouth do I hate*, Prov. 8. 13. And hating it he will *puniſh* it. *The froward tongue ſhall be cut off*, Prov. 10. 31. Be we ware then of keeping ſuch a tongue in our mouthes; however, of letting it looſe thus to ſpeak: But ſee that our words be mild and gentle. *Shewing all meekneſs to all men*, Tit. 3. 2. as in our dealings with them, ſo in ſpeaking to them. *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men*, 2 Tim. 2. 24. Theſe the Apoſtle reckons up among the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. *Gentleneſs, meekneſs*. By this means that fire may be quenched which froward ſpeech is apt to kindle. *A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath; but grievous words ſtir up anger*, (ſaith that Text fore-cited,) *Prov.* 15. 1. Churliſh *Nabal* by his froward language provoked *David* to wrath; but *Abigail* by her mild ſpeech appeaſed him, 1 *Sam.* 25. 10, 13, 24. And the like we read of *Gideon*, how when the men of *Ephraim* were angry with him, *chiding him ſharply*, he by his mild and gentle language pacified them; *Then their anger was abated towards him, when he ſaid that*, Judg. 8. 1, 3. Such let our language

language be; not froward or churliſh, but meek and gentle: Yea, however tempted and provoked to it by the froward tongues of others, yet anſwer them not in their own language; but either with *ſilence*, as *Hezekiah* willed the people to deal with railing *Rabſhakeh*, *The Kings commandement was, ſaying, Anſwer him not*; which they exactly obeyed, *The people held their peace, and anſwered him not a word*, 2 King. 18. 36. Or elſe with *mild words*, which are like a ſoft pillow to a hard flint, upon which it may ſooner be broken then upon a piece of Iron.

Mild language to be uſed in reproving of others.

And whileſt we make uſe of ſuch language upon all occaſions, do it ſpecially in our *Reprehenſions*. In reproving of others for their faults, which is not onely our *liberty*, but at ſometimes our *Duty* to do; *Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him*, Levit. 19. 17. *viz.* where God offereth a fitting opportunity, and there may be hopes of a Reformation: but do it with meekneſs and mildneſs. Eſpecially where the ſin is a ſin of infirmity. Now the Apoſtle would have Chriſtians to handle their Brethren tenderly, as the good and skilful *Chirurgeon* doth his *Patient*, whoſe Leg or Arm being out of joynt he cometh to ſet, which he doth with as much tenderneſs as may be. *Brethren* (ſaith he) *if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a one* (καταρτίζετε, *ſet him in joynt again*) *in the ſpirit of meekneſs*. Gal. 6. 1. By this means a cure may be wrought, whereas hard words might cauſe a feſtering in the Soul.

And

7. Quarrelling and wrangling.

And to this I might add, what is not unlike the former, a *Contentious Tongue*, which, upon all occaſions is ready to break out in quarelling and wrangling. This the *Wiſe-man* maketh a mark of a fool, *Prov.* 18. 6. *A fools lips enter into contention.* This do we not without juſt and weighty cauſe: And then manage it with all moderation and meekneſs; not ſuffering our tongues to flie, or run out beyond what is meet.

Domeſtical quarrelling to be taken heed of.

And, among other, take heed of *Domeſtical contentions*, betwixt *Husband* and *Wife*; *Maſters* and *Servants*; uncivil brawling, quarrelling, chiding. This is one thing which *Paul* willeth *Titus* to put both men and women in minde of, that they be *no Brawlers*, Tit. 3. 2. Ἀμάχους εἶναι, no fighters, no quarrellers, abſtaining as from other combats, ſo from thoſe of the Tongue. Which how great an evil it is in a houſe the *Wiſe-man* tells us more then once; *It is better to dwell in a corner of the houſe top, then with a brawling woman* (*a woman of contentions*, as the Hebrew hath it) *in a wide houſe*, Prov. 21. 9. repeated again, *Cap.* 25. *verſ.* 24. But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this any longer. Theſe particulars come under this *Head*: In ſpeaking *To*, or *with* our Neighbours, take heed *What* we ſpeak; having a regard both to the *Quantity* and *Quality* of our words.

2. To whom we ſpeak. Inſeriours to be reſpective in ſpeaking to their Superiours.

And ſecondly, *To whom* we ſpeak. That which may be ſpoken to one may not ſo fitly be ſpoken to another. *Inferiours* in ſpeaking to their *Superiours* are to ſpeak with an awfull and reſpectfull reverence. Thus are Chriſtians

to

to ſpeak to their *Rulers* and *Governours*: Though they be ſpoken to of them, and uſed by them, otherwiſe then is meet, yet they are not to ſpeak roughly unto them. *Paul*, being reprehended by the ſtanders by for his bold ſpeaking to *Ananias*, (whom they looked upon as the *High Prieſt*, though he was but his *Surrogate*, and an *Uſurper* of that Office) reprehending him for his Hypocriſie, and threatning him with a juſt judgment, *God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited wall* (ſaith he,) *And they that ſtood by ſaid, Revileſt thou Gods High Prieſt?* he maketh this Reply to them, *I wiſt not, Brethren, that he was the High Prieſt*, Act. 23. 4, 5. Intitimating to them, that had he apprehended him to be the lawfull *High Prieſt*, (which in truth he was not) he would not have made ſo bold with him as he did; *For* (ſaith he) *it is written, thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* And afterwards, ſpeaking to *Feſtus the Governour*, however he was uncivilly uſed by him, being openly cenſured for a mad-man, *Feſtus ſaid with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beſides thy ſelf, much learning doth make thee mad*; yet *Paul* returns him a meek and modeſt Anſwer, *He ſaid, I am not mad, O noble Feſtus*; ſo giving him the honour which was due to his *place*, though his *perſon* deſerved it not, *Act.* 26. 24, 25. Subjects to their Governours.

And thus are *Wives* to ſpeak to their *Husbands*; who being their *Head*, (as *Paul* calleth them, *Epheſ.* 5. 22. *The Husband is the Head of the Wife*,) an *Oeconomical Head*, ſet over them by God, ought not to be ſpoken to by them without due reſpect and reverence. This *Peter* taketh notice Wives to their Huſbands.

tice of as a thing very commendable in the Matrons of old, who were ſo *in ſubjection to their own Husbands*; And, in ſpecial, in *Sarah*, who (as he ſaith) *obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. wherein, as ſhe was a pattern to them, ſo he would have her to be to all others.

Children to their Parents.

And thus are *Children* to ſpeak to their *Parents*, whom the Law requires them to honour. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, Command. 5. Honour them, as by their *Obedience*, ſo by their *Reverence*; as with their *knee*, bowing to them, ſo with their *Tongue*, ſpeaking reſpectfully to them.

Servants to their Maſters & Miſtreſſes.

And ſo are *Seruants* to ſpeak to their *Maſters* and *Miſtreſſes*; *Being obedient to them, and pleaſing them in all things* (wherein they lawfully may,) they are *not to anſwer again*, Tit. 2. 9. μὴ ἀντιλέγοντας, not *contradicting* them, not *gainſaying* (as the Margin readeth it.)

Chriſtians to forbear ſpeaking to ſome.

And thus ſpeaking with an awfull reſpect to thoſe to whom it is due, ſome they are to *forbear ſpeaking* to.

To malicious enemies.

As to *malicious* and embittered Enemies: Let them ſpeak what they will of us, or to us, yet ſpeak not to them. So did *David*, as he declares it, *Pſal.* 38. 12, 13, 14. *They that ſeek my hurt ſpeak miſchievous things*, &c. *But I, as a deaf man, heard not, and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus was I as a man that heareth not, and in whoſe mouth are no reproofs.*

Obſtinate ſinners.

And ſo for *obſtinate ſinners*,, who will be ready to ſcorn and deſpiſe what is ſaid to them. *Speak not in the ears of a fool* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*,) *for he will deſpiſe the wiſdom of thy words*,

words, Prov. 23.9. And to the ſame purpoſe is that *Prohibition* which our *Saviour* giveth to his *Diſciples*, Matth. 7.6. *Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither caſt your pearls before ſwine, leſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.* Perſons openly profane and impious, being obſtinate in their wickedneſs, he would neither have them to be *reproved* by them for their ſins, nor to have the *Promiſes* held forth to them for their comfort. Neither of which is to be done but where there may be ſome hope of acceptance. Thus have a regard *to whom* it is that we ſpeak, that ſo we may either ſpeak as becometh us and them, or elſe be ſilent.

And (thirdly) *When* we ſpeak. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon*, (ſaith the *Preacher*,) *a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak*, Eccleſ. 3. 1. 7. And this Chriſtians are to have a regard unto, as in all their purpoſes and actings, ſo in their ſpeaking. This the *ſon of Sirach* in that Apocryphal Text maketh a point of great Wiſdom. *A wiſe man* (ſaith he) *will hold his tongue till he ſee opportunity, but a trifler and fool will regard no time*, Eccleſiaſtic. 20. 7. And again, *Cap.* 2. 26. *A tale out of time is as muſick in mourning, but wiſdom knoweth the ſeaſons of correction and doctrine.* And this are, as the *Miniſters* of God in ſpecial, ſo all others to have a regard unto, both in *reproving* and *comforting* of others.

3. When we ſpeak.

A fitting ſeaſon to be obſerved.

In *Reproving* them, waiting for a fit opportunity. So did *Abigail* in ſpeaking to her husband *Nabal*. So long as he was in drink ſhe let him alone, ſaying nothing to him concerning his ſhameful

In Reproving.

ſhameful abuſing of *David*, to the endangering of himſelf and his; but when he was come to himſelf, then ſhe ſpeaks to him that which he ſadly reſented. *She told him nothing, leſs or more, until the morning light. But it came to paſs in the morning when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him theſe things, that his heart dyed within him,* 1 Sam. 25. 36, 37.

In Comforting.

And ſo for *Comforting*. *Cordials* are not proper, nor ſafe for all ſick perſons, which may ſerve not to abate, but heighthen their malady. Neither are *Comforts* proper for all ſinners, nor at all times. Herein Wiſdome is to be uſed. *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned*, (ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*,) *that I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary*, Iſa. 50. 4. Such *Cordials* are proper for fainting ſouls, ſuch as are weary and heavy laden under the burthen of their ſins, or are under ſome great calamity, wherewith they are afflicted and affected. *Give ſtrong drink unto him that is ready to periſh, and wine unto thoſe that be of heavy hearts*, Prov. 31. 6. A *Receit* very proper for perſons ſo affected, whether taken *Literally*, or *Allegorically*. Words thus coming in their fit ſeaſon, as they are grateful and acceptable, ſo more profitable. *A word fitly ſpoken, (ſuper rotas ſuas, upon his wheels,* (as the *Hebrew* hath it) in due time and place) *is like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*, Prov. 25. 11.

A time to be ſilent.

And whileſt we have a regard when to ſpeak, ſo when to be *ſilent*. Thus we read of *Jobs friends*, how coming to give him a viſit, and finding him in a far ſadder condition then they expected, and

ſo

to not fit to be ſpoken to, they not willing to trouble him, ſate ſilent by him. *They ſate down with him upon the ground ſeven days and ſeven nights, and none ſpake a word to him, for they ſaw that his grief was very great*, Job 2. laſt. Thus did they wait till he ſhould offer ſome matter of diſcourſe unto them, that ſo they might know what was fit to be ſaid to him. And ſuch wiſdom are Chriſtians to uſe in *evil times*; when ſpeaking may be dangerous to themſelves, and not profitable to others. *Therfore the prudent ſhall keep ſilence in that time*, (ſaith the Prophet *Amos*) *for it is an evil time*, Amos 5.13. A time wherein rebukes would not be endured by their Tyrannical governors, which oppreſſed them; *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that ſpeaketh uprightly*, (as the 10*th* verſe hath it.)

4. The *Manner how* we ſpeak. Which let it not be

4. How we ſpeak.

1. Not Haſtily or Raſhly.

1. *Haſtily and Raſhly. Seeſt thou a man that is haſty in his words, there is more hope of a fool then of him*, Prov. 29.26. Such is the raſhneſs of ſome, of many, their *Tongues* run before their *wits*, they will not ſtand to deliberate, to conſider what they are to ſay, but ſpeak at random. Whatever their fancy prompts them with they utter it to others. And thus do they *anſwer* thoſe that ſpeak to them, ſuddenly, without any due conſideration of what is ſaid to them, or of what anſwer they are to return. This will not a wiſe and good man do. So the *Wiſeman* tells us, *Prov.* 15.28. *The heart of the righteous ſtudieth to anſwer*,

ſwer, *but the mouth of the wicked poureth forth evil things*: ſpeaking raſhly and abundantly, for want of due premeditation, which is their folly and ſhame to do. So he tells them, *Cap.*18.13. *He that anſwereth a matter*, (or *returneth a word*) *before he hear it*, (before he heareth the whole, ſo as he may throughly underſtand what is intended) *it is folly and ſhame* to him. This let not us give way to our *Tongues* to do, thus to run like Meſſengers before they are ſent, to ſpeak *Haſtily*.

2. Nor Clamorouſly.

2. Nor yet *Clamorouſly*. This is one of the Properties that *Solomon* ſets forth of a *Harlot*. Prov.7.11. *She is loud and ſtubborn*; having, as a flattering, ſo a clamorous tongue; which, though not always, yet often, and for the moſt part it is ſo. But this *Paul* exhorteth all Chriſtians (among other vices) to put away, *Eph.*4.31. *Let all bitterneſs, and anger, and clamour, and evil ſpeaking be put away from you.* Κραυγὴ, loud and fierce ſpeaking, or crying out where there is no juſt cauſe ſo to do. All theſe have we a regard to in ſpeaking *To* or *With* our neighbours.

The two other *Heads*, are ſpeaking *From* them, or *Before* them; of which more briefly.

III. Speaking from our Neighbours.

Speaking *from* them. Here take we heed:

1. Not reporting all that we hear.

1. Of *reporting all that we hear*. This (as before we heard) is the *Tale-bearers* work, who goeth from houſe to houſe, reporting in one whatever he heareth in another. A great fault. So the Apoſtle looked upon it in thoſe *young widows*, who being *Idle*, *wandred from houſe to houſe, and were tatlers, and buſie bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not*, 1 Tim. 5.13. This let none

none that are Chriſtians give themſelves to; what we hear from others, be ſparing in the reporting of it: firſt adviſing and conſidering whether it be ſafe and fit to be ſpoken of. Not *revealing of ſecrets.* This the *Tale-bearer* (as we heard) is very ready to do. *He that goeth about as a Tale-bearer revealeth ſecrets,* Prov. 20. 19. But this will not a wiſe and faithful man do. *A Tale-bearer revealeth ſecrets, but he that is of a faithful ſpirit concealeth the matter,* Prov. 11. 13. Not but that in ſome caſes (as before I ſhewed) where neceſſity requireth it, ſecrets may, and ought to be revealed. But not ſo in common and ordinary diſcourſe. This be we ware of.

2. And much more of reporting from others what we hear from them *otherwiſe* then they *ſpeak*, or then they *intended* it; *miſreporting* and altering either the *words* or *ſence*. Both theſe were thoſe *two falſe witneſſes* guilty of which came in againſt our *Saviour*, (of whom I alſo ſpake before) who gave in evidence againſt him, that they heard him ſay, *I am able to deſtroy the Temple of God, and to build it in three days,* Matth. 26. 61. wherein they altered both his *words* and *ſence*. His *words*: whereas he ſaid, *Deſtroy ye this Temple,* they charged him that he ſhould ſay, *I am able to deſtroy this Temple.* The *ſence*; whereas he ſaid, *Deſtroy this Temple,* ſpeaking of the Temple of his Body, (as St. *John* explains his meaning, *Joh.* 2. 21.) they charge him to ſay, *I am able to deſtroy the Temple of God*; In both which they wronged him. Take we heed that in what we report from others, we be not guilty of the

2. Not miſreporting.

like, whether *wittingly*, or *unwittingly*.

IV. Speaking Before our Neighbours.

4. Speaking *Before* them, in their Preſence and Audience. Here conſider before whom it is that we ſpeak.

1. Not being forward to ſpeak before our betters.

1. Not being forward in ſpeaking before *our betters*, ſuch as are *wiſer* or *greater* then our ſelves. For this *Elihu* excuſeth himſelf, in not ſpeaking unto *Job* in the preſence of his other friends, whom he looked upon as older and wiſer then himſelf, *Job* 32.6,7. *I am young* (ſaith he) *and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durſt not ſhew you mine opinion. I ſaid, days ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom.* And we read of *Paul*, how being brought before *Felix* the *Governor*, he was ſilent until he had leave from him to ſpeak. *Then Paul after the Governor had beckened to him to ſpeak, anſwered*, Act. 24. 10. And ſo, before ſuch as are, or ought to be *Teachers*, having Authority ſo to do, others are not to be over-ready in ſpeaking before them, ſo as either to teach them, or to take their office out of their hands, in teaching others in their preſence. Upon this account the Apoſtle interdicts all *women* to ſpeak in the publick Congregation, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. *Let your women keep ſilence in the Churches, for it is not permitted unto them to ſpeak*, (*viz.* to ſpeak there in an ordinary way, unleſs endued with an extraordinary ſpirit, in which caſe it was allowed them) *but they are commanded to be under obedience. And if they will learn any thing*, (*viz.* about what they were not ſatisfied in the publick hearing) *let them ask their husbands at home; For it is a ſhame for women*

women to ſpeak in the Church. And as he would not have women to teach in publick, ſo neither doth he allow it them to take upon them to be teachers of their Husbands, to do it in an Authoritative and commanding way. *Let the woman learn in ſilence with all ſubjection. But I ſuffer not a woman to teach, nor to uſurp authority over the man, but to be in ſilence,* 1 Tim. 2. 11, 12.

2. Not ſpeaking, or ſpeaking warily in a *promiſcuous company*, among perſons unknown, or not well known to us. Among whom ſome may be ready to take offence at what is ſpoken, or to take liberty, from what is ſpoken, to do what is not lawful or convenient for them to do. A thing which Chriſtians ought to beware of, of thus ſcandalizing their weak brethren; as by their *Actions, It is good neither to eat fleſh, nor drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother ſtumbleth, or is offended, or made weak,* (ſo ſaith *Paul* to his *Romanes*, Rom. 14. 21. which rather then he would do, he was reſolved (as he tells his *Corinthians*) *never to eat fleſh while the world ſtandeth,* 1 Cor. 8. 13. So by their *words*, not ſpeaking ought that may give offence to their weak brethren, or give occaſion to them to offend. 2. Speaking warily in promiſcuous company.

3. And being thus wary of ſpeaking amongſt thoſe that are *weak*, be we ſo much more among them that are *wicked*; who will be ready to carp at what is ſpoken, making an ill interpretation of what is well meant, and not ill ſpoken, and ſo make advantage of it to the detriment of the ſpeaker. Upon this account *David* (as he ſaith in the cloſe of this verſe whereof the Text 3. In wicked Company

is part) resolved to keep a strict watch over his tongue being in such company. *I will keep my mouth* (saith he) *with a bridle while the wicked is before me*; that so they might take no advantage against him. And upon the like account was our *Saviour* so silent when he was brought before *Caiaphas* and *Pilate*, *not answering them a word*, *Matth.*27.14. And so careful ought Christians to be in speaking before *malicious enemies*, Gods enemies, or theirs; either being silent in their presence, or very advised in what they speak, that so, however, the cause of God may not suffer in their inadvertency.

Thus have I now done also with the Second of these *General heads*, to which the evils of the tongue may be reduced, which is in reference to our *Neighbour*. Pass we now to the Third, of which very briefly,

III. *Head* Speaking of Our selves. Where take heed of

Which relates to *Our selves*. Περιαυτολογία. Here also are Christians to be very wary and watchful, taking heed that they *sin not with their tongues*; and so let us be: where take we heed (among other) of two things, *Speaking well of our selves*, *Wishing evil to our selves*.

I. Speaking well of our selves, gloriation.

1. *Speaking well of our selves*, Gloriation, Boasting. This is one of the evils of the Tongue taken notice of by St. *James*, Jam 3.5. *It boasteth great things*. A great Evil. So *Paul* looked upon it, who reckoning up the foul sins of the *Gentiles*, putteth this into the Catalogue, *They were proud, boasters*. Such were many of them then: And such the same Apostle foretelleth there should be many in the latter times,

2 *Tim.*

2 *Tim.* 3. 2. *Men ſhall be Boaſters, Proud*; ſtil putting theſe two together, as proceeding the one from the other. Pride being the mother of Boaſting. Take we heed that we be not found in this black Bill, ſuch as, being proud, and having high thoughts, ſpeak high things of our ſelves.

Chriſtians not to ſpeak high things of themſelves, as What they are,

What we are. Extolling our ſelves above others for our Wit, Learning, Parts, Abilities, Gifts, Graces. Such a *Boaſter* was the *Phariſee*, who coming into the Temple bleſſed God after that manner, *Luk.* 18. 11. *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this Publicane.* Let not Chriſtians thus think, or ſpeak of themſelves; but whileſt they think meanly, *not more highly then they ought to think, but think ſoberly*, (as the Apoſtle exhorts his *Romans*, Rom. 12. 3.) let them alſo ſpeak ſo, preferring others before themſelves. So did *Paul*, who calleth himſelf *the leaſt of the Apoſtles, not worthy to be called an Apoſtle*, 1 Cor. 15. 9. and elſewhere, *the chief of ſinners*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. And what he did he would have others to do the like, *in honour preferring one another.* Rom. 12. 10.

What they have done.

Or *What we have done*: what *good* things, what *great* things. In the former way the *Phariſee* there goeth on, reckoning up his good works; *I faſt twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I poſſeſs*: In the latter we may hear King *Nebuchadnezzar* boaſting, *Dan.* 4. 30. *The King ſpake and ſaid, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the houſe of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty?* But let not Chriſtians do the like:

What ever we be, or what ever we have done, let our own works praiſe us, as *Solomon* ſaith of a good houſe-wife, *Prov.* 31.31. *Let her own works praiſe her in the gate*; and let others praiſe us, if they will, as they ſhall ſee cauſe, but not we our ſelves. *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth; a ſtranger, and not thine own lips.* Prov. 27. 2.

Chriſtians how upon ſome occaſions they may glory of themſelves.

Not but that Chriſtians, upon ſome occaſions, may ſpeak of what they are, or have, or have done, yea, and *glory* therein. This we finde St. *Paul* doing, 2 *Cor.* 11.5. where he compares himſelf with the very chiefeſt Apoſtles, as equal with them; *For I ſuppoſe* (ſaith he) *I was not a whit behinde the very chiefeſt Apoſtles.* And as for others, who oppoſed him, he ſpares not to equalize himſelf with them, yea, to prefer himſelf above them, as to their legal prerogatives, and other their performances, *Verſ.* 22. *Are they Hebrews? ſo am I: are they Iſraelites? ſo am I: are they the ſeed of Abraham? ſo am I: are they Miniſters of Chriſt? I am more: in labours more abundant*; and ſo he goeth on, ſetting forth what he had done and ſuffered more then any of them. But this he did upon a juſt account, being provoked to it by their vilifying of him, and that not ſo much out of any reſpect to himſelf, as to *God* and his *Religion*, that ſo they might not ſuffer and be diſgraced through him. And upon the like account others may do the like. But in ſo doing let them take heed that they do not juſtly incurr that cenſure which *Paul* ſaith he might by ſome for ſo doing be judged worthy of. *That which I*

ſpeak

ſpeak (ſaith he) *I ſpeak not after the Lord, but as it were fooliſhly in this confidence of boaſting*; *Verſ.* 17. which he repeats once and again, *Verſ.* 21, 23. Speaking thus highly of himſelf, which he did without any expreſs command from God in his Word, (which no where putteth men upon ſuch gloriation, but rather dehorteth from it,) he might ſeem herein to act unwiſely, and be by ſome counted a fool for ſo doing. But he having ſo juſt a cauſe as he had for what he did, that freed him from that imputation. And let thoſe who ſhall do the like ſee that they have a like ground for it; having therein an eye more at *God* then themſelves; not glorying in *themſelves*, but in *God*. *He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord*, Jer. 9. 23. cited by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 31. making their boaſt in him; *My ſoul ſhall make her boaſt in the Lord*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 34. 2. Giving all the glory to him, through whoſe *grace* it is that they are what they are, as *Paul* ſaith of himſelf, *By the grace of God I am what I am*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. and through whoſe *power* it is that they have done what-ever they have done; *By thee have I run through a troop, by my God have I leaped over a wall*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 18. 29.

What they will do,

And ſo for what we *intend or purpoſe to do*. Here take we heed of *ſpeaking of high things*: Not ſpeaking with our *Tongues* as *Nebuchadnezzar* is charged to have done in his *heart*, Iſai. 14. 13. *Thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I will aſcend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God; I will ſit alſo upon the mount of the Con-*

gregation in the ſides of the North. But in this, as in what ever we ſay of our ſelves, ſpeak humbly, not making our ſelves *of the number of thoſe that commend themſelves*, (which *Paul* ſaith he did not dare to do, 2 *Cor.* 10.12.) Taking notice of what he ſaith in the cloſe of that Chapter, *For not he that commendeth himſelf is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*, Verſ. 18.

Much leſs to boaſt of what they are not.

And whileſt we do not dare to boaſt of what we are, much leſs dare we to do it of what we *are not*. A thing which not a few are guilty of, who think and ſpeak of themſelves far beyond their deſervings, beyond what they are, or have, or have done, or can ever hope to do. Such *Thraſoes* there are to be found every where, vainglorious braggers, and crackers: Take heed we be not found among them; taking notice of what the *Pſalmiſt* tells us, *Pſal.* 12. 3. *The Lord ſhall cut off the tongue that ſpeaketh proud things.*

Take heed of boaſting of what is Evil.

And taking heed of glorying in what is *good*, do we this much more of boaſting of what is *evil*. This was *Doegs* manner, as *David* ſaith of him, condemning him for it, *Pſal.* 52.1. *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in miſchief, O mighty man?* And would to God there were none of this number to be found at this day! ſuch as make it their boaſt what wickedneſs they have committed. But I leave them; onely minding them of what the Apoſtle ſaith of ſuch, *Phil.* 3. 19. *Whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe glory is their ſhame.* To which add that of St. *Jude*, verſ. 3. *Raging waves of the ſea, foaming out their own ſhame, to whom is reſerved the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever.*

2. The

2. The *ſecond particular is yet behind*, of which but a word, which is, *Wiſhing evil to our ſelves*, by *Imprecations*, *Curſes*; which in many profane mouths are very frequent, who are ready, upon all occaſions, to let flie theſe arrows at their own bodies and ſouls. This may not a man do to his *neighbour*, (as we have heard) much leſs to *himſelf*. A thing which many have ſmarted for, having that evil fallen upon them which they unadviſedly wiſhed. So have the *Jews* done; who, at our Saviours arraignment, when *Pilate*, who condemned him, would have waſhed his hands from the guilt of his blood, they cried out, *His blood be upon us, and on our children*, Matth. 27. 25. Which how heavily it fell upon them and theirs, not long after, in the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtories will tell us; and how it lieth upon them even to this day, as they cannot but feel, ſo all the world taketh notice of. A warning to all poſterity, to take heed and beware of ſuch raſh and wicked imprecations.

2. Wiſhing evil to our ſelves, Imprecation.

To theſe I might yet add ſome others; but I ſhall proceed no further. Thus have I, through Gods gracious aſſiſtance, held forth unto you a *Catalogue* of ſome of the *Evils of the Tongue*: Some, I ſay, not all. St. *James*, ſpeaking of the *Tongue*, ſaith, that it is *a world of iniquity*, Jam. 3. 6. Ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας. Now he that undertakes to travel over the world muſt make account to leave ſome corners of it undiſcovered, which may afterwards be found out by others: And ſo, I conceive, that there are yet divers more evils which this member is ſubject to then I have taken notice of.

This

This having done, what now remains? but that every of us reflect and look back upon what hath been ſpoken, beholding our own faces in this glaſs. Which doing, I preſume there is none of us but ſhall ſee ſome *ſpots* that call for *cleanſing*, ſome *failings* which call for *Humiliation* and *Reformation.* And this let every of us, in the fear of God, apply our ſelves unto; being humbled for what is paſt, and begging pardon in the Name of Chriſt, as for our other ſins, in deed, and thought, ſo in our *Words*, waſhing our *Tongues* in the blood of the Lamb, which (as St. *John* ſaith of it, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7.) *cleanſeth us from all ſin*, from the guilt of it; then ſet we upon a work of *reformation*, herein propounding holy *David*, the *man after Gods own heart*, as a pattern for our Imitation, taking up the like Reſolution as he here ſaith he had done, to *Take heed to our ways, that we ſin not with our Tongues*; and ſo ſtriving after that *perfection*, which St. *James* ſaith, that he who *offendeth not in word* hath attained to, *Jam.* 3. 2.

Directions for the Reforming and Governing of the Tongue.

For the promoting and furthering of which good work, let me briefly propound and ſet before you ſome few *Directions*, which may be uſefull and helpfull in this way.

1. Get the Heart purified and ſanctified.

1. The firſt whereof is, Labour to get our *Hearts Purified and ſanctified.* So it is, A mans *Heart* is his *Store-houſe* or *Treaſury*, out of which the *Tongue* bringeth forth ſuch as is there laid in. It is our *Saviours* own ſimilitude, *Matth.* 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man*

man out of the evil treaſure bringeth forth evil things. The Heart that is the *Fountain*, as of *Actions*, ſo of *Words*, and *Thoughts*, all which iſſue and come forth from it. Thoſe evils which proceed out of the *mouth* come forth from the *heart*; for *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies.* Matth. 15. 18, 19. Such is the *evil treaſure* which a wicked man bringeth forth out of this *Treaſury*; *The mouth of fools poureth out fooliſhneſs*, Prov. 15. 2. Whereas the good man out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things; *The tongue of the wiſe uſeth knowledge aright*, (as the former part of that Verſe hath it.) *The mouth of the righteous ſpeaketh wiſdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment; the Law of his God is in his heart*, Pſal. 37. 30, 31. So then, the firſt work here to be done, in order to the right governing of the Tongue, is to get the *Heart* ſet right, to get it *purified* and *ſanctified.*

1. *Purified*, and cleanſed: Cleanſed from that ſinful corruption which naturally dwelleth and reigneth in it. This is that which *David* maketh earneſt ſuit unto his God for, *Pſal.* 51. 10. *Create within me a clean heart, O God.* And this let every of us ſeek after. The heart of man is naturally a very *ſink of uncleanneſs*, being full of all ſinfull and inordinate luſts; and being ſo, the *Tongue* cannot but receive ſome infection from it: The *Heart* being unclean, ſuch are the *Lips*. *I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the middeſt of a people of unclean lips*, (ſaith the Prophet 1. Purified.

phet *Iſaiah*) Iſai. 6. 5. So as till the heart be purified the tongue cannot be kept from ſinning. *O generation of vipers*, (ſaith our *Saviour* to the *Phariſees*) *how can ye, being evil, ſpeak good things?* (in the Text fore-cited) *Matth.* 12. 34. True, indeed, *Hypocrites* (ſuch as they were) will, it may be, ſometimes ſpeak good things to deceive others, and advantage themſelves; yet the evil in their hearts will be breaking out at their lips, as occaſion is offered. Such water as is in the *Fountain* cometh forth by the *Conduit-pipe*; the one being corrupted, it cannot be expected that the other ſhould be wholſom: So is it with the *Heart* and *Tongue*, betwixt which two there is the like intercourſe; where the heart is haughty the tongue will ſpeak proud things; where the heart is full of anger, malice, and envie, it will break forth at the tongue in froward and malicious ſpeeches. Where the heart is full of uncleanneſs, it will make an unclean and filthy tongue. So then our firſt work (as I ſaid) is to get our *hearts purified.*

Which is done by Faith in Chriſt.

Which is done by *Faith in Chriſt.* Thus came the *Gentiles* to be made partakers of this benefit, as *Peter* tells the Apoſtles and Elders met together, *Act.* 15. 9. *God gave unto them the Holy Ghoſt, purifying their hearts by Faith*, by believing on Chriſt. And would we be made partakers of the like, ſeek it in the ſame way, by Faith in Chriſt, believing and laying hold upon him, that ſo we may receive from him both *Water* and *Blood.* Both which, as they came out from him in his Paſſion, when his ſide was pierced upon the Croſs,

Croſs, *Joh.*19.34. ſo he is ſaid to come by both, 1 *Joh.* 5.6. *This is he that came by water and blood*, waſhing away both the *guilt* and *filth* of ſin, the one by his *Merit*, the other by his *Spirit*. Now for both theſe benefits repair we unto him, that being waſhen with his *blood* we may be cleanſed from the *guilt* of ſin; and being waſhen with *water* by his Spirit, we may be cleanſed from the filth of it. This is one of the bleſſings of Chriſts Kingdom, which he maketh promiſe of to his people under the Goſpel, *Ezek.*36.25. *I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs, and from your Idols will I cleanſe you*: freeing and delivering them, as from the guilt, ſo from the filth of their ſins. And for both theſe have we recourſe unto Jeſus Chriſt, who having purchaſed the one with his *Blood*, can and will effect the other by his *Spirit* in thoſe who believe on him. Thus ſeek we after *purification*, that our *Hearts* may be cleanſed, ſo as though ſinful corruption do ſtill in meaſure remain in them, ſome dregs being left (as it is in the beſt) yet it may not rule and reign there.

2. And this our *Store-houſe* being thus in meaſure through grace freed from this *evil Treaſure*, now get it layed in with that which is *good*. Our hearts being *purified* ſee that we be *ſanctified*, and that *wholly* (as *Paul* prayeth for the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Theſ.5.23. Ὁλοτελεῖς; *throughout*, in all the powers and faculties of our *Spirits*, *Souls*, and *Bodies*, (as he diſtinguiſheth them in the words following.) In our *Underſtandings*, *Wills*, *Affecti-*

Sanctified throughout.

ons,

ons, Senſes. Thus the *Spirit of Sanctification*, in making a man a *new Creature*, runs through the whole man, both inward and outward. Beginning at the *Head*, the Underſtanding, it goeth to the *Heart*, the Will and Affections, and from them to the *Animal* part, the Senſes, enduing them all with ſuch graces and vertues as they are capable of. And this work let every of us, who would be kept from ſinning with our tongues, ſeek after and labour for; begging it of *the God of peace*, that he would thus ſanctifie us.

1. In our Spirits, that they be endued with Wiſdom and Underſtanding.

1. In our *Spirits*, our minds, enduing them with wiſdom and underſtanding. *Give me underſtanding* (ſaith *David*) *and I ſhall keep thy Law, yea I ſhall obſerve it with my whole heart*, Pſal. 119.34. This is requiſite in a Chriſtian: that he may keep Gods Laws he muſt firſt know them, what they are. *Give me underſtanding that I may know thy Teſtimonies*, (ſaith he) *ver.* 125. what it is that the Law requires to be done, or ſaid, and what it forbiddeth. And this *Underſtanding* let every of us ſeek for, that we may know what we ought to ſpeak, and what not to ſpeak, when to ſpeak, and when to be ſilent, and ſo how to order our Tongues aright. This is *Wiſdoms work*, thus to teach and inſtruct the *Tongue*. *The heart of the wiſe teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips*, (ſaith *Solomon*) Prov. 16.23. This Wiſdom ſeek we after, ſeeking it *from above, from the Father of lights, from whom* (as St. *James* ſaith) *every good and perfect gift cometh down*, Jam. 1.17. Conſulting with his *Word*, taking our Directions from thence, making that our *Rule*,

as

as to *walk*, ſo to *talk* by; ſo ordering our *Tongues* according to the Rules there preſcribed.

2. And being thus in meaſure layed in our *ſpirits*, in our minds, our underſtandings; now ſeek we the like for our *Souls*, our *Wills* and *Affections*, that they may be endued with ſuch Graces and Virtues as are requiſite for a Chriſtian. Which whileſt they are, they will bridle our Tongues, keeping them from ſinning. As

2. In our Souls, our Wills and Affections, that they be layed in with all requiſite graces.

1. With *Humility*. Where there is a humble heart the Tongue will not ſpeak proud things. Thoſe who think meanly of themſelves will not be ready to ſpeak diſdainfully of others. Where the *Heart* lyeth low, the *Tongue* will not riſe high, in exalting of a mans ſelf, or depreſſing of others.

1. Humily.

2. *Charity*, that excellent grace, which whileſt it *covereth a multitude of ſins*, (as St. *Peter* ſaith of it, 1 *Pet.* 4. 8.) yea *all ſins* (as the *wiſeman* ſaith, *Prov.* 10. 12.) ſuch as may be covered, it will not ſuffer the tongue to diſcover, and lay open what ought to be concealed, the Infirmities of Brethren. Whileſt it *ſuffereth long, and is kinde*, (as *Paul* ſaith of it, 1 *Cor.* 13. 4.) it will keep the tongue from being eaſily ſet on fire, from flying out upon every ſleight provocation, and falling foul upon others in harſh and unkind language: whilſt that *envieth not* (as he there goeth on,) it will not ſuffer diſdainful or opprobrious ſpeeches to fall from the lips: whileſt that *vaunteth not it ſelf, is not puffed up*, (as it followeth,) it will reſtrain the tongue from vain gloriation, and bragging,

2. Charity.

from

from boasting of great things; whilest that *thinketh no evil* (as the next Verse hath it,) οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακὸν, plotteth no evil against another, nor without just cause suspecteth it by him, it will bridle the tongue from charging it upon him, by speaking evil of him: while that judgeth the best, it will keep the tongue from speaking the worst: whilest that *rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth*, (as the 6th. Verse hath it,) it will not suffer the tongue to say *Aha, Aha*, (as *Davids* Enemies did to him,) to insult over others in their Calamities, specially whilest they suffer wrongfully (as he did.) Whilest that *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things*; (as he goeth on, *ver.*7.) believeth and hopeth all good of and from a mans neighbour, patiently bearing all wrongs and injuries from him, it will not suffer the tongue maliciously or rashly to break forth against him.

3. Patience. 3. To these I might add *Patience*, which goeth along with *Charity*. This whilest it keepeth possession of the soul, it will restrain and keep in the tongue, that it do not break forth into murmuring against God, whatever his dispensations be.

4. Meekness. 4. And so *Meekness*, which the Apostle joyneth with the two former, 1 *Tim.*6.11. where he calleth upon *Timothy* to *follow after* them all, *Love, Patience, Meekness*. This follow we after, that we may have *a meek, and a quiet spirit*; which as it is a *great Ornament* to a Christian, so *in the sight of God* it is πολυτελὲς, *of great price*, (as St. *Peter* saith of it, 1 *Pet.*3.4.) highly esteemed

of

of by him. This lying in the bosome will make a still and quiet tongue, keeping it from quarrelling, or froward speaking.

5. To this joyn *Sincerity and Truth*, which the Psalmist putteth together with meekness, *Psal.* 45. 4. *Because of truth and meekness.* Where there is a sincere & upright heart, *Truth in the inward parts*, (which *David* saith the Lord desireth, *Psal.* 51. 6.) it will keep the tongue from *speaking leasing*, from lying, flattering, false accusing, slandering, backbiting: where there is a oneness in the heart, there will not be a *double tongue* in the mouth.

These, and divers other graces there are, which whilest they dwell in the heart will have an influence upon the tongue. Which let every of us beg from *the God of all Grace*, that by the working of his Spirit in us, the store-house of our hearts may be layed in with this *good treasure*; that these graces may be bestowed upon us, and encreased in us, so as we may come to learn and practise this Lesson, to *take heed to our ways, that we sin not with our Tongues.*

3. And our *Spirits* and *Souls* being thus Sanctified, now have we an eye also to our *Bodies*, the *Animal part* of our Souls, that that also may partake of this *Anointing*, so as that our Bodies may be such as becometh *the Temples of the Holy Ghost*; (which the Apostle saith the Bodies of Believers are, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19.) that we *possess these vessels in sanctification and honour*, (which *Paul* calleth upon his *Thessalonians* to do, 1 *Thes.* 4. 4.) not prostituting them to intemperance or uncleanness;

3. Our Bodies, that they be Temperate and Chaste.

neſs; both vvhich the Apoſtle there ſtrikes at in the former part of that Chapter, as unbecoming Chriſtians. Both theſe take we heed of; living *Soberly and Chaſtely*, which will conduce much to the right ordering of our *tongues*. He that is ſober in his *life* vvill be ſober in his *language, ſpeaking forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs*, (as *Paul* ſaith he did to *Feſtus*, Act. 26. 25.) Whereas intemperance letteth looſe the tongue to all kinde of vain, fooliſh, ſcurrilous, filthy and profane ſpeaking; men often ſpeaking that vvhen the drink is in, vvhich they have cauſe to repent of vvhen it is gone out; then diſcovering their nakedneſs, (as *Noah* did his,) revealing vvhat ought either never to have entred into the heart, or to have been locked up there. And ſo vvhere there is a *Chaſte body*, there vvill be alſo a *Chaſte tongue*. Thus then that vve may keep our Tongues from ſinning, ſeek vve after this *inward Purification and Sanctification*; that the Body of ſin being mortified in us, we may be thus endued with all ſuch graces and vertues as a Chriſtian ought to be adorned with. To vvhich ſubjoyn ſome other *Directions* briefly.

Direct. 2. Be jealous over our ſelves.

2. Being in meaſure thus Purified and Sanctified, be vve yet *Jealous over our ſelves*; jealous (as *Paul* ſaith he vvas over his *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 11. 2.) *with a godly jealouſie*; Jealous, as of our *Hearts*, ſo of our *Tongues*; knowing and remembring how ſubject that member is to miſcarry, by reaſon of the remainders of Corruption vvithin, and Sathan vvithout, vvho is ever at hand, ready upon all occaſions to ſtrike fire into that

that tinder. Upon this account, what proficiency ſoever we have made in grace, let us never be ſecure, but always fearful. *Happy is the man that feareth alway*, (ſaith *Solomon*) Prov. 28. 14. feareth God and himſelf, leſt he ſhould offend him by ſinning againſt him. And let this fear be ever upon our hearts, fearing them, and fearing our Tongues.

Direct. 3. Keep a continual watch over our Tongues.

3. And being thus jealous over our Tongues, *ſet and keep a continual watch over them.* This will *Citizens* do; though dwelling in a *walled City*, yet being jealous of enemies within, or from without, they will keep watch and ward, day and night, for their own ſecurity. And the like do we over our *Tongues*, which though walled in (as we have heard) by a double wall, the *Teeth*, and the *Lips*, are yet in continual danger by reaſon of enemies both within and without; keep watch and ward over them, every night calling our ſelves to an account for what hath paſſed out of our lips in the day. As *David* ſaith, he *thought of his ways*, Pſal. 119. 59. So do we alſo of our words, that if we have *ſinned with our Tongues*, (as who is there but every day doth) we may be humbled for it, and be more watchful for the future. Then ſet we a watch over them every morning, renewing our holy purpoſes and reſolutions (as *David* here doth his) that we will, through the grace of God aſſiſting of us, ſo *take heed to our ways that we ſin not with our Tongues.*

Direct. 4. Set the Lord always before us.

4. And thus ſetting and keeping our watch, *ſet the Lord alſo before us.* So did *David*, *I have ſet the Lord always before me*, (ſaith he) *Pſal.* 16. 8.

16.8. And this do vve, having God ever in our eye, apprehending and conſidering how he *ſeeth* and *heareth* us. Beholding all our *Actions*, he heareth all our *words*; and hearing them he taketh notice of them, vvriting them in his *Book*. So as vve are to be accountable to him, not onely for every *wicked*, but for every *vain* and *idle* vvord, being judged by our *words* as vvell as our *works*; both vvhich our Saviour mindes the Phariſees of in that Text vvhich vve cannot hear of too often, *Matth.*12.36,37. *I ſay unto you, every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned.* This let us often think of; vvhich vvhileſt vve do, let us *walk in the fear of the Lord all the day long*; a filial child-like fear, fearing leſt vve ſhould ſin againſt him vvith our Tongues. This is the Antidote vvhich the *Preacher* preſcribes as moſt ſovereign againſt this evil, *Eccleſ.*5.7. *In many words there are alſo divers vanities, but fear thou God.* This vvill reſtrain and keep in the Tongue; to vvhich end make vve uſe of it.

*Direct.*5. Beg it of him that he would ſet a watch over them.

5. And thus ſetting the Lord before us, now *go we unto him*, and beg it of him, that he vvould do that for us vvhich vvithout his aſſiſtance vve cannot do for our ſelves, *ſet a watch over our mouthes.* This vvas *Davids* Prayer for himſelf, Pſal.141.3. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.* This *David* himſelf had reſolved to do, (as the Text tells) but he durſt not truſt to himſelf. And therefore he maketh

maketh his Application unto his God, that he would do it for him: without his assistance all our endeavours will be to little purpose. As he saith of a *City*, Psal. 127. 1. *Except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain.* So may we say of our *mouthes*; Except the Lord keep them, our watching will be to no purpose. And therefore be we earnest and frequent at the Throne of Grace, begging this among other favours, that God would do this for us, thus watch over us, by the custody of his Grace, and direction of his Spirit, keeping and guiding us, as in our *ways*, so in our *words*, that we may not sin against him with our Tongues. To which Custody commit we our selves by Faith.

Direct. 6. Commit our Tongues to him in well doing. An idle hand maketh a busie tongue.

6. And thus committing our *Tongues* unto him, let it be, as St. *Peter* would have *suffering Saints* to do their *Souls*, 1 Pet. 4. 19. *In well-doing.* Not being *Idle.* So it is, *an idle hand maketh a busie Tongue.* So saith *Paul* of those young *Widows*, in that Text before made use of, 1 *Tim.* 5. 13. which having *cast off their first faith*, (left and forsaken the service of the Church, to which before they were engaged, and by which they were maintained;) *withal* (saith he) *they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; And not onely idle, but tatlers, and busie bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* Thus, not having other employment, idle persons make this their business, to meddle with other folks matters, things which concern them not. And so not doing what they ought, they will be speaking what they ought not. To avoid the one, take

we heed of the other. Let our *hands*, our *heads* be employed in ſome honeſt and lawful calling, that ſo our *tongues* may not miſcarry, in ſpeaking either too much, or what is not lawful or expedient.

Direct.7. Employ our Tongues about holy uſes.

7. And laſtly, That our *Tongues* may not be thus miſ-employed, *let them alſo be employed*: Employed about *holy uſes*, in ſpeaking to *God*, and to *others*. They who do not accuſtome themſelves to talk with *God* will never talk as they ought to do with *Men*. And therefore exerciſe we our ſelves in this holy conference, being much in ſpeaking to God, and of God; in *praying* to him, and *praiſing* of him; making uſe of our *Tongues*, as the Meſſengers of our Hearts, to preſent our Requeſts unto him, and as Trumpets in ſounding forth his praiſes. *Let my mouth be filled with thy praiſe, and with thy honour all the day*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal.71.8. *My mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſs, and thy ſalvation all the day*, Verſ. 15. *Seven times a day do I praiſe thee*, Pſal.119.164. And ſpeaking to God, ſpeak we alſo to our Neighbours of God, *talking of all his wondrous works*, (as *David* calleth upon us to do) *Pſal.* 105. 2. communicating unto them the gracious experiences which we have had of his mercy and goodneſs. *Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 66. 16. Speaking unto them, as occaſion is offered, ſomewhat that may tend to their edification. This the Apoſtle putteth Chriſtians upon, *Eph.* 4. 29. *Let no corrupt communication come out of your mouth, but*

but that which is good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace unto the hearers. Such is the *Honey* which is ſaid to have dropped from the *Spouſes lips*, Cant. 4. 11. *Thy lips, O my ſpouſe, drop as the honey-comb, honey and milk are under thy tongue*, gracious words dropping from the Churches mouth. Such were the words which fell from our Saviours mouth, wherewith thoſe who heard him are ſaid to have been ſo much taken, *Luk.* 4. 22. *All wondred at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth.* Herein propound we him as a pattern for our imitation, inuring our tongues to ſpeak ſuch language. The tongue, being thus employed, may be an uſefull inſtrument to others, more then any other member of the body: *The tongue of the wiſe is health*, (ſaith *Solomon*) Prov. 12. 18. ſerving to heal the ſouls of others. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life*, *Prov.* 11. 30. The fruit, as of his *hands*, ſo of his *lips*, as his *works*, ſo his *words*, being gracious, they are to the ſouls of others as the *Leaves of that Tree of Life*, which are ſaid to *heal the Nations*, Rev. 22. 2. medicinable, and profitable. Which let it make us the more ready and forward in taking hold upon any opportunity for Godly and Religious diſcourſe: Onely obſerving what *Caveats* and *Rules* were before preſcribed, that we do not take upon us to teach our Teachers, nor to ſpeak of things too high for us; but ſpeaking in due time and place, being by Providence called to it, and put upon it. Thus whileſt we acquaint our *Tongues* with ſuch language, the *Language of Canaan*, it will be a ſovereign preſervative to keep both

both our ſelves and others from ſpeaking the *Language of Aſhdod*, profane and ſcurrilous language, ſuch as becometh not the mouth of a *Citizen of Sion*, any one that beareth the Name of a Chriſtian.

And thus have I, through the conduct of a gracious aſſiſtance, held forth what I apprehend to be uſefull and needfull concerning this *Subject*. What then remains, but that I ſend my Prayers after it, begging it of God, That he would ſo water this good ſeed, which hath been ſown by a weak hand, with the influence of his Grace and Spirit, that it may take rooting in our hearts, my own, and yours to whom theſe Meditations ſhall come, and bring forth fruit in our lives, that we may learn and take out this *Leſſon*, (which none of us have yet ſo learned as we ought to do,) *To take heed to our ways, that we ſin not with our Tongues.* AMEN.

If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man, Jam. 3. 2.

FINIS.